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HISTORY OF RELIGION
IN ENGLAND

History of Religion in England from the Opening of the Long Parliament to 1850 by JOHN STOUGHTON D.D

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I.

CHURCH AND STATE.

Coronation of William IV., 1.—Reform Bill, 2.—Unpopularity of Bishops, 4.—Negro Emancipation, 5.—Church Reform, 8.—Pamphlet Literature, 11.—Meeting for Disestablishment, 15.—Lord Henley's Plan of Reform, 16.—State of Things in Ireland, 17.—Parliamentary Measures, 19.

CHAPTER II.

DIVERGENT LINES OF THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT.

Latitudinarianism, 23.—German Theology, 24.—Coleridge, 26. Thomas Erskine, 28.—Anglo-Catholicism, 34.—Richard Hurrell Froude, 36.—William Palmer, 37.—J. H. Newman, 38.—Keble and Pusey, 39.—*Tracts for the Times*, 41.—Oxford Doctrines, 45.

CHAPTER III.

BISHOPS AND CHURCH ACTIVITY.

Dr. Carey, Dr. Phillpotts, 49.—Dr. Carr, Dr. Maltby, Dr. Grey, Dr. Butler, Dr. Allen, Dr. Otter, Dr. Longley, Dr. Stanley, 50.—Royal Commission, 51.—Church Architecture, 53.—Christian Knowledge Society, 55.—Propagation Society, 57.—Church Missionary Society, 57.—Revival in the Church of England, 59.

CHAPTER IV.

TYPICAL CHURCHMEN.

High Church, Low Church, Broad Church, 61.—Keble, 62.—Pusey, 65.—Hook, 66.—G. A. Selwyn, 70.—Evangelicals: McNeile, Close, Stowell, Bradley, Baptist Noel, 73.—E. T. M. Phillipps, 74.—H. Melville, 76.—Whately, 77.—Hampden, 80.—Shuttleworth, 81.

CHAPTER V.

NEW MOVEMENTS.

Influence of American Revivals, 83.—Spiritual Movement amongst Dissenters, 85.—Age of Great Societies, 87.—Exeter Hall Meetings, 88.—London City Mission, 93.

CHAPTER VI.

DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTARYISM.

Congregational Library, 102.—Congregational Union, 104.—Declaration of Faith and Order, 108.—Deputation to America, 112.—Colonial Missionary Society, 112.—Algernon Wells, 113.—Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, 114.—Voluntary Church Associations, 116.

CHAPTER VII.

THE THREE DENOMINATIONS.

Presbyterian Board, 121.—*Regium Donum*, 124.—Aspland and Madge, 125.—Congregational Board, 126.—Congregational Lecture, 130.—James Stratten, 134.—John Leifchild, 135.—Thomas Binney, 136.—Visits of Missionary Converts, 139.—Dr. Philip and John Williams, 140.—Dr. McAll, 141.—London University, 143.—Spring Hill College, 144.—Baptist Board, 145.—Ivimey, Robert Hall, Kinghorn, Drs. Cox, Steane, Price, J. H. Hinton, 146.—Baptist Missions, 149.—General Baptists, 151.

CHAPTER VIII.

METHODISM.

Dr. Adam Clarke and Richard Watson, 153.—Anti-State Church Agitation and J. R. Stephens, 155.—Debates, 156.—Drs. Warren and Bunting, 157.—Wesleyan Methodist Association, 161.

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUEEN, PARLIAMENT, LAW, AND RELIGION.

Coronation of Her Majesty, 163.—Sermons by Dr. Arnold and Sidney Smith, 164.—Education taken up by Parliament 167.—Course pursued by Dissenters, 169.—Bill for Opening Universities, 171, Religious Meeting at Manchester for Abolition of Corn Laws, 172.—Political Excitement, 175.—Gorham Controversy, 176.

CHAPTER X.

TRACTARIANISM AND RITUALISM.

Dr. Newman's Publications, 182.—Library of the Fathers, 183.—Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology, 185.—No. 90, and other Publications, 187.—Attitude of the Bishops, 188.—The Anglican *Via Media*, 193.—Steps Romewards, 194.—Keble and Pusey, 196.—Dr. J. M. Neale, 199.—Williams, 200.—Commencement of Ritualism, 201.—Thirlwall and Wilberforce, 204.—Hampden, 205.—How the Episcopal Bench dealt with Ritualism, 206.—Evangelical Controversialists, 207.—Effects of the Anglo-Catholic Movement, 210.

CHAPTER XI.

BROAD CHURCHMEN.

Whately, 217.—C. J. Hare, 218.—F. D. Maurice, 219.—Kingsley, 224.—H. Alford, 225.—F. W. Robertson, 226.—A. P. Stanley, 227.—Canon Pearson, 230.

CHAPTER XII.

SOCIAL LIFE AND CHURCH WORK.

The Bishop's Palace, 233.—The Bishop's Work, 234.—The Deanery, 235.—Archdeacons: J. Sinclair and W. Hale, 238.—The Parsonage: Eversley and Clovelly, 240; Aston Sandford, 241.—The Aristocracy, 242.—Church Organizations, 244.—Reports of Propagation and Church Missionary Societies, 246.

CHAPTER XIII.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

Vicars Apostolic, 251.—Maynooth, 253.—Progress of Catholicism, 255.—Roman Catholic Aggression and Cardinal Wiseman, 256.—Dr. Grant, 258.—Division into Territorial Districts, 259.—Durham Letter, 260.—Prince Consort's Reflections, 261.—Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, 263.—Dr. Lingard, 264.

CHAPTER XIV.

DISSENT AND THE ESTABLISHMENT.

Dr. Chalmers' Lectures, and Dr. Wardlaw's Reply, 266.—Josiah Conder and *Eclectic Review*, 269.—Religious Freedom Society, 269.—Edward Miall and the *Nonconformist*, 272.—British Anti-State Association, 272.—Different Opinions, 273.

CHAPTER XV.

FREE CHURCHES OF THE PERIOD.

Chairmen of Congregational Union, 276.—Colonial, Home, and Irish Evangelical Societies, 279.—Dr. Campbell and *Christian Witness*, 281.—Congregational Lecture, 282.—Congregational Colleges, 286.—Chapel Building, 288.—Foreign Missions: Dr. Livingstone, 289; Dr. Moffat, 291.—Distinguished Ministers, 292.—“Eclipse of Faith,” 294.—Baptist Chapels and Ministers, 297.—Unitarian Presbyterians, 301.—Lady Hewley's Trust, 302.—Dissenters' Chapel Bill, 303.—Scotch Presbyterianism in England, 305.—Distinguished Ministers, 306.

CHAPTER XVI.

METHODIST CONTROVERSIES.

Centenary Celebration, 310.—Fly Sheets and Expulsions, 315.—New Methodist Association, and United Methodist Free Churches, 317.—William Bunting, 318.—New Connexion, 320.—Primitive Methodists, 320.—Old Calvinistic Methodists, 323.

CHAPTER XVII.

QUAKERISM AND MORAVIANISM.

The Inward Light, 326.—Decline in Numbers, 327.—Attachment to Evangelical Truths, 329.—William Forster, 330.—J. J. Gurney and Mrs. Opie, 331.—Samuel Gurney and Mrs. Fry, 332.—Caroline Fox, 334.—Moravian Synods and Settlements, 335.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

Mr. Groves, 336.—Mr. Darby, 337.—Mr. Newton, 341.

CHAPTER XIX.

UNION.

Origin of Evangelical Alliance, 343.—Public Meetings, 345.—Congress at Freemasons' Hall, 346.—Fundamental Articles, 347.—Controversy Relative to American Slavery, 350.—General Council in London, 1851, 351.—Sir Culling Eardley (Smith), 351.—Archbishop Sumner, 352.—Alliance Work, 353.—Young Men's Christian Association, 354.

CHAPTER XX.

JUBILEES.

Baptist Missionary Society, 357.—London Missionary Society, 360.—Church Missionary Society, 363.—Religious Tract Society, 369.—Propagation Society, 370.—Prince Consort's Speech, 371.—Sunday School Jubilee, 374.—Bible Society, 376.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH.

Swedenborg's Works, 380.—Doctrinal Statements and Memorable Relations, 381.—Account of Swedenborgianism, 382.—Hartley and Clowes, 383.—Liturgy, Articles, and Reports, 384.

POSTSCRIPT.

	PAGE
SECTION I.— <i>THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND</i>	386
SECTION II.— <i>NONCONFORMITY</i>	404
SECTION III.— <i>EXTRAORDINARY RELIGIOUS SERVICES</i>	424
SECTION IV.— <i>CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP</i>	429
SECTION V.— <i>THEOLOGICAL OPINIONS</i>	436

CHAPTER I.

CHURCH AND STATE.

1830-1837.

WILLIAM IV. succeeded his brother on the 25th June, 1830; and it was a circumstance illustrative of changed times, as well as of the sovereign's character, that whereas at the coronation of George IV. the utmost ceremonial splendour was displayed, now, though a queen shared in the solemnity—and, in this respect, Westminster Abbey witnessed a revival of what had not occurred since the crowning of George III.—the coronation was shorn of its ancient glories, there being neither banquet nor the usual procession.

Contemporary excitements account for this. Those who cannot look back over fifty years and recall the condition of England at that period, have no idea of what was going on. The unpopularity of the Wellington administration had just before reached its height. The declaration of the great chief that he would not listen to any proposal for parliamentary reform had agitated the country from the Land's End to John-o'-Groats, not to speak of the sister isle. Defeated on the question of the Civil List, he had to resign office, and the new occupant of the

throne, rightly gauging the national sentiment, called to his counsels Earl Grey, who composed a cabinet consisting of pledged Reformers. The popularity of the new government was greater even than the unpopularity of the old one. Not only did politicians hail the dawn of modern liberties, but common people were thrown into raptures of delight, and in every imaginable way gave expression to their joy. Vehicles, pockethandkerchiefs, and bits of earthenware were named after political favourites; pictures and images of Grey, Brougham, and Russell might everywhere be found. The sight of those heroes was cheered to the echo, and multitudes dreamt that the Millennium had dawned.

The first Reform Bill of 1831 was rejected in committee. A dissolution immediately followed. A large majority of Liberals carried the second Bill in July of the same year, and then it was thrown out by the Lords. A third Bill followed in 1832, which, after being passed in the Lower House, was again jeopardized in the Upper Chamber. At length, influenced by a threat of creating new peers, and by royal persuasion privately exercised, the new Charter was accepted, and received the Royal assent in the month of September. Riots occurred in the course of the conflict, and peaceable citizens trembled as they heard of a gaol broken open at Derby, of a castle burnt down at Nottingham, and of fearful excesses in the streets of Bristol. Agricultural and commercial distress were not absent from the evils of the hour. The cholera, too, visited the country in the winter of 1831-2, and deepened the darkness of the social

atmosphere. A touching incident is related in the *Life of Arnold*, showing how an agitation produced by manifold circumstances penetrated one of the retired and tranquil corners of the Church of England.

“There are those amongst his pupils who can never forget the moment when, on that dark November afternoon, after the simple preface, stating in what sense worldly thoughts were or were not to be brought into that place,¹ he at once began with that solemnity which marked his voice and manner when speaking of what deeply moved him:—‘I need not tell you that this is a marked time—a time such as neither we, nor our fathers for many generations before us, have experienced; and to those who know what has been, it is no doubt awful to think of the change which we are now about to encounter.’ (*Serm. vol. ii. p. 413.*) But in him the sight of evil, and the endeavour to remove it were hardly ever disjointed; and whilst everything which he felt partook of the despondency with which that sermon opens, everything which he did partakes of that cheerful activity with which the same sermon closes in urging the example of the Apostle’s wise and manly conduct amidst the dangers of storm and shipwreck.”²

We speak of the present as a time of unsettlement, a vague yearning after change. It may be safely said that what we witness now was far surpassed by what occurred half a century ago.

All kinds of questions pressed to the front, religious ones amongst the rest; indeed some of the latter took the lead. Unfortunately for the Church of

¹ Village Church of Laleham, near Staines.

² Stanley’s *Life of Arnold*, vol i. p. 281.

England, bishops incurred odium from their opposition to reform. They were mobbed as they passed through Palace Yard, and once a dissenting minister, mistaken for a prelate, as he walked through one of the London suburbs, met with insult from passers-by. So unpopular did spiritual lords become, that it was proposed in the House of Commons that they should be relieved of "their legislative and judicial duties." This proposal was repeated, and it was urged that the sitting of bishops in Parliament tended "to alienate the affections of the people from the Established Church." It was not a dissenting crusade. People in general who favoured reform were alienated from the prelates because they opposed liberal measures. They had almost all been appointed by Conservative governments during a long lease of political power. For the most part they continued to adopt aristocratic habits, and lived apart from the commonalty. The revenues of certain sees were enormous, very different from what they are now; and there was a display of wealth and state and splendour such as could not fail to alienate the humbler class. Neglect of spiritual duties, absence of religious zeal, immense nepotism, and the toleration of abuses and scandals in clerical life, had been for many years increasing public disfavour.

Large numbers also of clergymen throughout the country were opposed to reform, and did what they could to help the return of Tory members; but there were a few prominent on the popular side. Sydney Smith stood forth almost alone in his political advo-

cacy, and made at Taunton a never-to-be-forgotten speech, in which he compared the spirit of reform to the Atlantic Ocean, the opposition of the Lords to the vain attempt of Dame Partington, with her "mop and pattens," to stem the tide as it rose on the beach. "The Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington."

If Churchmen made themselves conspicuous in opposing Reform, Dissenters were conspicuous in supporting it. Though Nonconformist ministers then were more averse than at present to electioneering activity, some whom I knew were conspicuous in the support of the Liberal interest; and, in the county of York particularly, it was owing largely to their exertions that Reform victories were won.

Religion had much to do with one important measure which early occupied public attention after the Reform Bill had been passed. The abolition of slavery had for some years evoked the zeal of both Churchmen and Dissenters, and—as an instance—in the Norfolk Shirehall there might be seen at a large public meeting Lord Calthorpe, an Episcopalian, and Joseph John Gurney, a Quaker, side by side, exposing the wrongs of the black population in our West Indian colonies. The advocacy of emancipation was assisted by missionary reports and missionary speeches. The death of Smith, a Nonconformist minister, in prison at Demerara, was related in numerous publications; and the eloquence of William Knibb, a Baptist, who with thrilling eloquence described what his congregation in Jamaica had endured, and who exhibited chains such as bound the negroes' hands, and whips such as seamed the negroes' backs,

made an overpowering impression upon crowded audiences. The dishonour done to our merciful religion and the obstacles thrown in the way of its diffusion, supplied potent arguments for overthrowing the system ; and no doubt the religious element in the enterprise did more than anything else to accomplish the desired issue. The most laborious and energetic leaders of this crusade from the beginning were religious men. Wilberforce and Clarkson were so ; the same may be said of Thomas Fowell Buxton, on whose shoulders Wilberforce's mantle fell when the patriarch of the cause had "fulfilled his course." Powerful deputations, consisting of clergymen of different denominations, crowded the rooms of ministers in old Downing Street, to strengthen their hands in the parliamentary work before them. Mr. Stanley, afterwards Lord Derby, by five resolutions, brought before the House of Commons in 1833, made the cause, which had been so long neglected, a decidedly Government question. As the Abolition Bill was passing through the House—as it was read the second time—the news of its success reached the man who had for years stood in the forefront of the battle. "Thank God," cried Wilberforce, "that I should have lived to witness the day in which England is willing to give twenty millions sterling for the abolition of slavery." It was a grand triumph of Christianity, the grandest in a national respect the world had ever seen. Wilberforce died the 29th of July, and the Bill was read a third time on the 7th of August. The Bill passed the Lords, received Royal assent, and became English

law. A system of negro apprenticeship was to precede perfect emancipation ; and, on the 1st of August, 1834, the looked-for dawn of freedom was hailed in the colonies, not by dissipation but by religious worship. Planters shook hands with their former bondsmen in the house of God ; and whilst prayers and hymns went up on the other side the Atlantic, there were services held in many an English church and chapel, where those who had laboured for years at their task of mercy rested from old toils, endeared by holy memories, and commended to the care of heaven those who that day for the first time enjoyed their birthright. It was suggested that a Scripture gift should be made to the blacks when they were delivered from the yoke of bondage. The Bible Society adopted this idea, and the fund for carrying it out amounted to £16,249 5s. 9d. It was found impracticable to get the books ready by the 1st of August ; so the distribution began on Christmas-day and continued till the August of the following year. Nearly 100,000 copies of the New Testament and the Psalms were distributed on this memorable occasion. The present was announced in a Catholic chapel, and the priest promised to help forward the object.¹ The books were eagerly sought after, and disappointment was expressed when they could not be obtained.²

The spirit of reform was not likely to pause after it had done one great political work. The state of

¹ *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, vol. ii. p. 400.

² *Ibid.*, p. 402.

the Church had long employed the nation's thought, and that thought had been expressed in various ways. It was felt that the time had arrived when ideas should be shaped into acts. Nobody could deny that ecclesiastical affairs were in a state demanding immediate improvement. As Church and State were closely connected, whatever theory might be upheld as to the connection, the State was imperatively bound to take up the matter and to legislate on the temporalities of the Establishment. When temporalities came under discussion, it was difficult if not impossible to separate them from what was religious. The appropriation of Church revenues could not be considered apart from inquiry as to the performance of clerical duties. Thus pluralities, non-residence, neglect of discipline, and incompetent discharge of ministerial functions, came under notice, and, associated with them, appeared the fact of great inequalities in the payment of clergymen, especially in the contrast between episcopal revenues and the incomes of curates and many incumbents. Statements made respecting the condition of the Church by Churchmen themselves were perfectly astounding. "Non-residence, pluralities, one instead of two services once a week, or sometimes only once a fortnight—an abuse which had reached such a pitch as to have produced one instance (happily rectified before the time now described) in which sixteen churches were served by two brothers; carelessness in admission to Holy Orders; imperfect administration of the rites of baptism and burial;—such were some of the more obvious anomalies which had made the diocese

of Norwich a by-word for laxity amongst the sees of the Church of England. That there were signal exceptions to the state of neglect need hardly be stated, nor should it be forgotten that the abundance and contiguity of churches peculiar to East Anglia rendered some of the above-mentioned omissions more conspicuous in appearance than they were important in reality."¹ If this be counted an extreme case, stated by one who was a Low Churchman, let another statement be adduced supplied by one who was a High Churchman. Prebendary Stephens, in his life of Dr. Hook, alludes to an observation by a Bishop of New York who visited England in 1824, that whilst the English clergy were good scholars, they were commonly ignorant of theology; he further endorses what had been said by a suburban rector of the country clergy, that they were characterized by depth of knowledge as to the flight of swallows and the habits of hedgehogs; and next he quotes Sydney Smith's rhyming burlesque of Bishop Blomfield's Chester charge in 1825, as indicating truly enough the kind of amusements to which the country clergy, in that part at least of the country, were addicted.

"Hunt not, fish not, shoot not;
 Dance not, fiddle not, flute not;
 But before all things, it is my particular desire,
 That once at least in every week, you take
 Your dinner with the squire."²

¹ *Memorials of Edward and Catherine Stanley*, p. 33.

² *Dean Hook, his Life and Letters*, p. 102.

The order, or rather disorder, of things produced a deep impression upon different classes of persons, who looked at what had been going on from their own particular point of view.

Radical politicians were violent in their condemnation of the Church. Its abuses, and unfairly distributed wealth were exposed with merciless ridicule and satire. I question whether, in the present day, with all the liberty of the press, there are forms of attack on any institutions of the country to be compared with those which were common in reference to the Establishment, between 1820 and 1830. William Cobbett assailed it with the bitterest virulence ; and, in 1824, in his *History of the Reformation*, represented it as brought forth by hypocrisy and perfidy, and cherished and fed by plunder, devastation, and rivers of innocent blood. He treated its history as corresponding with its origin, and amidst what he called the dreadful perils arising out of it, he prayed God would save this country from “further devastation and misery.”

Dissenters, both those who were of the old-fashioned type, and those further advanced, had a great deal to say about Establishments in general, and the English one in particular. They had formerly dwelt upon the Christian simplicity of Nonconformist worship and order without looking much further. The Minerva of modern Dissent did not leap full-armed from Jupiter-like brains. Ecclesiastical ideas were vague and unsettled ; but those who entertained them came at last to discern what they could not see at first.

The father of Lord Beaconsfield remarks that "wherever pamphlets abound there is freedom, and therefore have we a nation of pamphleteers." Doubtless the freedom of the press reached its majority fifty years ago, if not before ; and no subject inspired the activity of ephemeral authors more than the state of the Establishment, and how it was proper for Parliament to deal with it. Floods of pamphlets issued from the press. Out of a number of these I select two. One is entitled, "The Church of England and the Dissenters," published in 1832. It boldly objected to the alliance between Church and State, contending that it impaired the spirituality and efficiency of the former, but the writer did not touch the question as to its effect on the latter. He objected to the tithe system as inapplicable to the Christian Church, and as an after-thought of the fourth century. He attacked patronage as absurd and productive of evils which every friend of religion and of his country must lament. He assailed pluralities as unjust to the working clergy, as enriching some, whilst it left others in beggary ; and he stated as a fact, that according to the last returns there were in the Church 4,184 resident incumbents, and 6,375 non-residents. He dwelt upon the political subserviency of clergymen, exposed clerical oaths and subscriptions, and ended with a defence against the charge of schism. The other pamphlet was of a different character, of later date—1834, and consisted of a letter addressed "To the King." It undertakes to explain the objects of Dissenters at that crisis. It affirms that they did not seek the destruction of the Episcopal Church ; nor

aim by violent measures to accomplish desirable ends; nor to obtain admission into the Establishment; nor to interfere with Church reform; nor to mix up with dissenting grievances the question of Church property. Dissenters, moreover, it is affirmed, were not merely willing, but anxious that the interests of incumbents in the national property should be held inviolate. It is also maintained that Dissenters were not opposed to a legitimate connection between religion and the State.

“ It is said further the Constitution in Church and State is no longer, as in the days of the Tudors, that of one kingdom, but of three. It has passed from English into British. But there is no British Church. The king, as head of the Church of England, is no longer the ecclesiastical head of an entire nation, but only of a sect. The Church of Scotland divides with it the favour of the State; while the Dissenters, Protestant and Catholic, far exceed in their present numbers the total population of England and Wales at the beginning of the last century. In the year 1700, the sceptre of England was not acknowledged by more than thirteen millions of subjects in both hemispheres. Twenty-four millions are now contained in the Britannic Isles, while the British sceptre extends over not less than 150 millions—more than a sixth portion of the human race. Thus have political changes, far greater and more important than any which can now be contemplated, taken place, not only without violence, but almost imperceptibly; to which it is inevitable that the constitutional polity of these realms should be accommodated. The minor changes which are sought for, are rendered necessary by the greater ones that have already taken place. Reform, instead of bringing on revolutions, has been consequent upon it. And, at the present moment,

strange to say, the Oxford Regius Professor of Divinity has stated it to be questionable whether the separation of Church and State has not already taken place! If so, surely the separation cannot necessarily involve any violent disruption, for none has been felt; nor any terrible calamity, or the fact could not be doubtful. The British monarchy experienced no shock, nor suffered any diminution of its substantial power, when the title of King of France, which had for ages been claimed by the kings of England, was laid aside. Nor would the constitutional sovereignty of the crown be shorn of any of its prerogatives, if the empty title of Defender of the Faith was discarded as unsuitable to a Protestant King, and that of Head of the Church were resigned to Him, who is Head over all, the King of kings, the Sovereign Ruler of princes."

"Dissenters conceive," the writer goes on to say, "that the catholic recognition of Christianity by the State is a duty of paramount obligation, but that this is incompatible with the enforcement of one particular form of Church polity upon the community, or with a preference on the part of the State of a particular sect. They refer to the example of the nation of the United States, who have retained the Christian religion as the foundation of their civil, legal, and political union, while they have refused to continue a legislative preference of any particular sect, and have, after trial in many of the States, entirely abolished a State provision as injurious to the interests it was designed to foster. Dissenters have arrived at their convictions upon these points by no process of hypothetical reasoning, but by experience and deduction from fact. They behold religion flourishing in America without an Establishment to an extent which admits of no comparison with any country under heaven except their own; while in the sister kingdom, the wealthiest ecclesiastical establishment in Europe is seen co-existing with the most frightful degree of popular ignorance

and social disorder. Nothing, therefore, can be more remote from their designs than the weakening of the legitimate ties between religion and government ; and to class them with the enemies of the Christian faith, who may from opposite motives be hostile to religious establishments, is to commit as gross an offence against truth and charity as the first persecutors of Christianity were guilty of in confounding the disciples of Christ with ringleaders of sedition and atheists, and in imputing to them the disturbance of the State and the burning of Rome."

Such was the style of argument adopted by some Dissenters in those days ; and it is worth while, for historical purposes, to dig these passages out of forgotten pamphlets. So far this pamphlet gives but a negative view of the subject. Then we find a statement of objects which were desirable—religious equality, a catholic recognition of the dissenting ministry, the establishment of a national system of education, and freedom to prosecute their own plans for the propagation of Christian faith. The two pamphlets are open to criticism : some might think that the first went too far ; some will think that the second does not go far enough.

The pulpit and the platform came in aid of the objects contemplated—the pulpit very sparingly—for in those days it was reserved for religious teaching ; and it was a rare thing to introduce even ecclesiastical politics into popular discourses. But the platform was much used, especially in reference to what were called dissenting grievances. The want of a system of registration for births, requisite for the maintenance of certain rights to property, was unjust

to anti-pædobaptist denominations, and often inconvenient to other bodies whose register had been carelessly kept ; the necessity of being married in the Church of England ; the payment of Church rates ; and the exclusion from parochial burial grounds unless Church offices were used. These were insisted upon as social hardships. At the present day they are allowed to have been such. It was far different then, the most obstinate resistance to these mild and legitimate claims being made by a majority of Churchmen. No doubt resistance exasperated dissenting advocates, and in the heat of discussion severe things were said on both sides. Public meetings were held, great excitement followed, petitions for relief were presented to Parliament, and public opinion advanced until measures were carried such as will be presently described. Indeed some Dissenters took up in a very determined way the question of Disestablishment.

A meeting at Manchester was held in March, 1834, when the first resolution was to this effect : "The grievances of the Dissenters, as they are called, must in a Reformed Parliament ere long be redressed—common justice, sound policy, the interests of religion, demand it. But so long as the great question of alliance in Church and State remains untouched, the branches of the tree may be lopped off, but the root of bitterness will remain."¹

It may be added here that when the Reform of the

¹ There were other meetings of a similar kind ; one was at Nottingham, of which I cannot recall the date.

Irish Church came before Parliament in 1833, and eleven bishops voted in favour of it, this brought out an indignant address from a presbyter in the Diocese of Canterbury, who complained of English Churchmen uniting with Dissenters, Papists, Socinians, and other reckless laymen, in forcing through the Civil Legislature a measure affecting the Church in Ireland which the spiritual pastors of that Church did, with almost unanimous voice, declare to be injurious to the spiritual interests of their flocks.

About the same time Lord Henley recommended a plan for putting an end to non-residence, for extinguishing sinecures, and for appointing over each cathedral a Dean with "a more scriptural name," to superintend the whole duty with two assistants. He added suggestions for a revival of church services and for terminating all pompous ceremonial. Moreover, he urged that the system of episcopal translation should be discontinued, and that a retiring fund should be established for laborious clergymen. He further suggested a curtailment of the dioceses of Chester, Lincoln, York, Lichfield and Coventry, Exeter, Norwich, London, Durham, and Winchester; and further that there should be an enlargement of the Dioceses of Worcester, Hereford, Oxford, Peterborough, and Rochester. The Welsh bishoprics he wished to be altered. Other arrangements of a similar kind are described in this pamphlet.

Lord Henley's pamphlet appeared in 1834, and in the same year "a Whig of the Old School" declared, "the dangers that beset the Established Church are now, we apprehend, beyond dispute.

The storm which has long been gathering over it, appears about to break; its thunders approach nearer, and its lightnings already glisten around the pinnacles of the Temple."

These are only a few specimens of publications issuing from the press at that crisis. Persons strongly attached to the Church, by no means advocates of the voluntary principle, and strongly opposed to dissenting opinions, in various ways manifested their discontent with things as they were, and earnestly recommended a reform. The waking up of this spirit, and the display of its intense vigour at the opening of the second quarter of this present century, is truly wonderful, for the slumber before for a long time had been very profound. The discussion of these topics did not end in mere talk, and we must now watch successive measures adopted by the legislature for ecclesiastical improvement; it is remarkable how carefully Parliament picked its way over the thorn-covered path, what caution and firmness were manifested by cabinet ministers, how slowly some reforms advanced in comparison with others, and how an occasional ebbing of the tide was succeeded by a resistless flow of advancing waves.

Ireland was the first field, as already intimated; and no wonder, when the state of that country is taken into account, and it is remembered how small a proportion of the inhabitants were in communion with the Established Church.

The state of things in Ireland had reached a deplorable pass in 1831, when it was found that in many parishes a collection of tithes had become impossible.

Tithe proctors were murdered, the police and the military together could not enforce the law. Bayonets in the farmer's field, employed to secure the tenth sheaf of corn, betokened revolution. Roman Catholics were desperate, the Protestant clergy were despondent. The Lord Lieutenant in 1832 was at his wit's end, and received authority to advance £60,000 upon uncollected tithes. When to recover that sum arrears had to be levied, a tremendous conflict ensued. Ireland was in rebellion ; and in 1833 Parliament had to send over a million of money to relieve starving clergymen. Cabinet ministers in that year took the bull by the horns, and introduced a measure under the title of the Church Temporalities Bill. It suppressed two archbishoprics and eight sees, and reduced the income of remaining bishops. Sinecure stalls in cathedrals were abolished ; payment was to be given only where work was done ; neglected livings were to be filled up by efficient clergymen ; church cess was to be no longer claimed from Catholics, and the expense of repairing churches was to be met by a graduated clerical tax. Such a sweeping measure took away the breath of many Churchmen, who began to think of what might follow in England. There was an outcry raised against spoliation and sacrilege, but a majority of the Commons stood up in favour of the bill. The grand difficulty was the question of appropriation. A surplus was anticipated after equitable claims were met ; what was to be done with it ? Some said it was to be redistributed over the Church ; others that the legislature had a right to dispose of it for the public benefit. The bill at

first proposed that the surplus, after spiritual claims were met, should be left to be disposed of as Parliament might direct. A compromise was effected without settling that point, and the Temporalities Bill became law. In 1834 the question was re-opened, when a commission to inquire into church revenues and church duties was the result, but this did not prevent a battle over the appropriation question, after the dissolution of Lord Grey's government. The Whigs in opposition, acting on party tactics, took up the abstract principle of appropriation which they had previously declined to affirm ; and unfortunately for their political consistency, after they had employed it as an engine for displacing Sir Robert Peel's government, they had themselves to abandon it altogether. What was fatal to the Whigs proved beneficial to the Irish Church ; for, in 1838, tithes were commuted into a permanent rent charge, and income was placed on a basis which lasted for years.

English Church Reform did not come into parliamentary hands until 1835. The net ecclesiastical revenues then amounted to £3,490,427, of which £435,046 was appropriated for the support of bishops and other dignitaries, whilst many incumbents had a small income ; a commission was now appointed to look into the matter, to make reports, and prepare schemes. Out of this commission sprung several reforms. The commission was to be, and is, a permanent institute, to consider the revenues of English and Welsh dioceses, to effect a more equal distribution of both, to examine the state of cathedral and collegiate churches with a view to their increased

efficiency, and to devise the best mode of providing for the cure of souls, by the residence of clergymen in their benefices.¹ From the commission proceeded the following plans, which were adopted by Parliament: Diocesan boundaries were altered; Gloucester and Bristol were constituted one see; Manchester and Ripon were made bishoprics; episcopal revenues, and the patronage connected with them, were readjusted so as to reduce the incomes of the rich and to increase the incomes of the poor. The surplus was to be devoted to the augmentation of small livings, pluralities were restrained, residence was enforced.²

Tithes were paid in kind down to the year 1836; the tenth sheaf in the field, the tenth sheep in the flock, the tenth pig in the farmyard, was the parson's property. A commutation of tithe had been staved off from time to time. Pitt was for it in 1791, but the Archbishop of Canterbury did not accept the change. In 1833, in 1834, and in 1835, this improvement was rejected; but in 1836, Lord Melbourne's government accomplished the long deferred task: but it took fifteen years to make it operative in every parish. "To no measure since the Reformation has the Church owed so much peace and security. All disputes between the clergy and their parishioners in relation to tithes were averted; while their rights, identified with those of the lay impropriators, were secured immutably upon the land itself."³

In 1838 the evil of non-residence was resolutely

¹ Original Instructions to the Commissioners.

² May's *Const. Hist.*, vol. iii. p. 217.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 220

grappled with by Parliament. By the first and second Acts of Queen Victoria, an incumbent absenting himself, without licence from his bishop, for a period of three months and under six, was to forfeit a third of his income ; for an absence above six and not more than eight, one-half ; and for a whole year, three-fourths. Heads of colleges in Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Eton, Westminster, and Winchester, were exempted from non-residential penalties. Other changes were effected in which the interests of Non-conformity were promoted. In 1836 a charter was bestowed on the London University, whereby literary degrees could be authoritatively conferred without the imposition of any religious tests whatever.

Soon after the commencement of Church reforms, Lord John Russell obtained a general registration of births, deaths, and marriages, and also secured an Act for regulating the marriages of Dissenters. The antiquated system of parochial registry was very imperfect, open to serious mistakes and omissions, and in many cases quite untrustworthy ; at the same time the registry of baptisms kept amongst Dissenters was fragmentary, incomplete, and in numerous instances entirely lost. Both to Church people and Dissenters this improvement in registration was a valuable boon ; and the latter class by the new marriage law were considerably relieved from a grievance of which they had long complained. The regulations, however, did not fully satisfy Dissenters, and they were therefore subjected to frequent criticism ; they underwent certain alterations in the 19th and 20th years of Queen Victoria.

The amount of ecclesiastical reform and of extended religious liberty within the space of about six years is remarkable, not as regarded from the point of view which makes its necessity obvious and overpowering, but as placed in contrast with the long delay of reformatory attempts. Nor did it accomplish all which was needful. It left plenty of work to be done in after years. Slowly since then, one after another, grievances have been met, evils have been removed, improvements have been accomplished. Still there are abuses remaining, especially in connection with Church patronage, as almost everybody has acknowledged. Church reform was one of the results of parliamentary reform, but not to go deeper down than that is to leave an inadequate idea of what really produced these alterations. They were the results of that tide of excitement which had been swelling long, and which rushed at last in mountain billows over the fourth decade of the present century. Many thought the world was coming to an end, that at least the Established Church was being upheaved from its foundation ; whereas these reforms strengthened its corner stones, added buttresses to its walls, and gave it a new lease of continuance. But for what was done in the reign of William IV., it would have now been in a different position from what it is ; no parliamentary acts could have availed for its safety apart from improvement in its internal condition.

CHAPTER II.

DIVERGENT LINES OF THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT.

1830-1837.

THERE are two forms of theology which began a decided course of development at the period now before us. The one did not reach maturity till a later period, but it was being born into the English world; the other started at once into vigorous existence, and attracted attention on all sides.

The first was pronounced by some Latitudinarian, by others Rationalistic. To this intellectual procedure, differently denominated, Germany no doubt made large contributions. Its literature began to be studied by a few English divines before the year 1830; but it was chiefly through the medium of English translations and English descriptions that Teutonic ideas were conveyed to our countrymen. Attention here was turned in some quarters to the writings of Emanuel Kant, in spite of the notion that his speculations were unintelligible, and they were producing results similar to those in the Father-land. Use was then made of his critical theory for the purpose of sweeping away pietistic sentiments

and orthodox beliefs, by maintaining that it is impossible to solve spiritual questions ; that they are inexplicable, and had better be put aside altogether ; that the duty and interest of mankind is to serve God by the education of conscience and the practice of morality, under the light of reason. Yet the Bible remained. It was read at church, old-fashioned men and women and simple-hearted children believed in it ; what was to be done with so potent a force ? Take the moral precepts and leave the supernatural element, was the reply. The miracles admit of a natural explanation ; they were mistaken phenomena or exaggerations of simple incidents. Commentaries were brought over to this country full of such teaching. Many works undermined Scripture without attacking it. Bible language was used in non-natural meanings, and Christ and His apostles were made to speak now in one dialect of rationalistic theology, then in another. The startling theory of Strauss did not appear until 1835. Fuerbach began his career of authorship in 1833. Auguste Comte, the French philosopher, contributed a share to the tide of thought which set in from various quarters, and which differed from English speculations of the last century. The last of the authors named held extreme views which were repellent to most Englishmen.

Another German théologian came to be known in our country some time before the end of the first quarter of this century. His aim was not to destroy Christianity, but to build it up. Many of his doctrines were orthodox, and much of his spirit was evangelical. Schleiermacher's method was dogmatic.

He would not confound philosophy and religion, but he maintained where there is no religion there can be no theology; he said, where there is no *experience* of Divine things the Gospel cannot be understood. All religion, all theology, is based on trust in God. A feeling of Divine dependence lies at the basis of this system. To the consciousness rather than the authority of early Christendom he appealed in support of his convictions; at the same time he did not regard the inspiration and authority of Scripture as orthodox thinkers generally do. Yet he held evangelical principles, which had their roots in the Bible; but, not distinguishing the teaching of spiritual intuition from the teaching of Holy Scripture, he employed the first to explain the second, and aimed at a thorough reconciliation of the two. Of Schleiermacher's learning, ability, and piety there can be no doubt, and whatever is thought of him, we must allow that he rendered important service to religion in his own country by insisting upon evangelical truths which had been denied or neglected. His influence as a biblical critic was brought over here by Dr. Thirlwall—who became Bishop of St. David's—through a translation of Schleiermacher's *Introduction to the Gospel of Luke*, in which the author's theory of its origin is seen to be of a rationalistic character. He treats it, according to Thirlwall's account, as a compilation of fragments from different sources, "without any reasonable account of the reverence in which this work has been held since the middle of the second century. A mere compiler could not have attained to such a consideration."

But whatever effect Schleiermacher might have directly on English thought, there was an English layman imbued with similar ideas who succeeded in diffusing them over a wider sphere, indeed throughout the length and breadth of this country. Coleridge published *Aids to Reflection* in 1825, and thereby made a deep impression on thoughtful readers. Some indeed could not understand, but others eagerly drank in his words. He declared "the Christian faith, in which I include every article of belief and doctrine, professed by the first Reformers in common, is the perfection of human intelligence." "Moral goodness is other and more than prudence, or the principle of expediency; and religion more and higher than morality." He contended for peculiar Christian doctrines; saying, there are mysteries, in evidence of which no reason can be brought, but it was his endeavour to show how the true solution of the problem is, that these mysteries are reason in its highest form of self-affirmation. He adopted the maxim of Augustine and Anselm, "that men must believe in order that they may understand;" quoting the former, who says, "the faith ought to precede the understanding, so that the understanding may be the reward of the faith." Coleridge adds, "Revelation has provided new subjects for reflection, and new treasures of knowledge, never to be unlocked by him who remains self-ignorant." As to the bearings of Christianity on the fact and doctrine of original sin, he declared, "The doctrine, that is, the confession of a known fact, Christianity has only in common with every religion, and every philosophy, in which the

reality of a responsible will, and the essential difference between good and evil, have been recognised. Peculiar to the Christian religion are the *remedy*, and for all purposes but those of a merely speculative curiosity, the *solution*. By the annunciation of the remedy, it affords all the solution that our moral interests require, and even in that which remains and must remain unfathomable, the Christian finds a new motive to walk humbly with the Lord his God.”¹ Without formally acknowledging the authority of Divine Revelation in the Bible which alone affords a solid basis for such beliefs as his, he notwithstanding did very obviously derive from that blessed book the main landmarks of his faith. He really drew from the Bible much which he taught; and a peculiar charm is given to the *Aids* by axioms adduced in evangelical language, supplied by Archbishop Leighton, for whom Coleridge had a profound veneration. It may be truly said that some who have had doubts respecting evangelical truths find them dispelled by Coleridge’s help. Yet the fact remains that, like Schleiermacher, he confounded human intuition with Divine inspiration, and carried the former too far, in his keen contention for a difference between reason and practical understanding. The authority of Revelation, the obedience of faith, the duty of accepting the Divine oracles, this is lost sight of, and it is in this defect that much of the rationalism amongst religious people was helped forward at this critical juncture.

There was another layman, who exhibited a phase

¹ *Aids to Reflection*, p. 283.

of thought of a different aspect from that which distinguished the writings of Coleridge. He departed from the old standards of the Scotch Church to which he had belonged, and inculcated sentiments inspired by an attractive freshness and vigour of mind ; and so contributed to promote in England, where his writings became popular, a stream of opinion and feeling opposed to what had been upheld as orthodox divinity. I refer to Thomas Erskine, a man with an intensely reflective mind and of elevated spiritual character, who could diffuse much of the tone of his own beautiful life over the pages of his books.

He produced two remarkable works, *Remarks on the Internal Evidence of the Truth of Revealed Religion* (1820), and *The Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel* (1828). The last of them is referred to by Mr. Maurice¹ as having contributed to form those convictions which in numerous publications he enforced on his fellow-countrymen.

In the first of Erskine's two essays he, so far from saying one word in depreciation of the authority of Scripture, really made his argument tributary to the establishment of its Divine claims ; but then he also said certain things which could be employed so as to countenance what are described as rationalistic habits. He spoke of the internal evidence as "altogether independent of our confidence in the veracity of the narrative of the facts ;" and years afterwards, in explanation of the idea he developed, he remarks, "I must discern

¹ See Dedication prefixed to the *Lectures on the Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament*.

in the history itself a light and truth which will meet the demands both of my reason and conscience. In fact, however true the history may be, it cannot be of any moral and spiritual benefit to me, until I apprehend its truth and meaning. This, and nothing less than this, is what I require, not only in this great concern, but in all others." There is nothing heterodox in such a statement when properly guarded, and it may be reconciled with the admission that the Bible is the authoritative teacher of religious knowledge; but when not so guarded, when dwelt upon apart from an express acknowledgment of Scripture authority, it served to help forward the new current which was to spread far and wide a few years later. A side of truth came forward which had been overlooked; and there was a tone in such teaching different from what had existed amongst either the Orthodox or the Evangelical of the last century. It did not broach the idea of a *verifying faculty*, which afterwards played so large a part in theological discussions, but it might and did prepare for it.

The second work by Erskine, though it proceeded along the same kind of path, pointed to another subject. It resolved religion into human consciousness—treated it as *subjective* rather than as *objective*, to use words which have become fashionable; but the point intended to be strongly exhibited was this, that under the gospel all men are actually forgiven; and that what they need is a consciousness of this, such faith as will prove a fountain of gratitude and obedience to Almighty God. "Men are not, according to the gospel system, *pardoned* on account of their belief of

the pardon; but they are *sanctified* by belief of the pardon. And unless the belief of it produces this effect, neither the pardon nor the belief are of any use." The pardon of the gospel is a spiritual medicine, faith is nothing more than the taking of the medicine. "As the giving of the vine to the branch includes all that the vine has to give, so the giving of the Immanuel to the world includes all that God has to give. When we know this we are justified by faith—that is to say, we assume our God's forgiveness as included in the gift of Himself."¹ This is very different from the teaching of Evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics and Reformers, and was vigorously confronted by Dr. Wardlaw. Erskine's former work had been widely welcomed, but this, in many quarters, met with a different reception. The subjective side of the gospel was so brought to the front, as to hide the other—often called the objective one. What we experience is so exhibited as to divert attention from what God is revealed as having actually done, and as still doing for the children of men. The Incarnation, the Atonement, as momentous facts upon which faith so much depends, were pushed virtually aside to leave the field almost entirely occupied by spiritual consciousness. Believing that all men are represented in Scripture as really forgiven, his grand object was to make them *feel* that they are forgiven. He exemplified the one-sidedness which has ever been the bane of theology as the human mind rushes from one extreme to another—now absorbed in what is without, then engrossed

¹ *Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel*, pp. 23, 89.

with what is within ; at one time historical facts being in the ascendant, at another present experiences. The *mystery* of Redemption revealed in God's Word has often filled the whole thoughtfulness of the Church ; but the *manifestation* which shines on our reason, which satisfies our intellect, which inspires our affection, came, at the period I speak of, to be in some quarters so realized as to throw the mystery, at least to some extent, into the background. Erskine's writings afforded help to this tendency, though he remained decidedly evangelical.

Between Schleiermacher, Coleridge, and Erskine, in spite of differences, strong points of resemblance may be seen. They are all three clearly distinguishable from old Orthodox and Evangelical thinkers. They did not appeal to patristic literature after the manner of the first, nor did they lay down certain propositions which they proved by a citation of Scripture texts after the manner of the second. They had within them very strongly what is termed a subjective element, a habit of looking at questions in the light of their own spiritual consciousness. They believed in an intuitional faculty of knowledge relative to Divine things, and bringing their own mental idiosyncrasy to bear on Scripture studies, they looked at biblical passages and trains of thought through a certain medium which coloured their interpretations. They saw in the sacred volume what students of other schools did not and could not see.

Much of this kind of thought in theology, under the conservative influence of personal piety, no doubt received encouragement and stimulus from such writers

as Schleiermacher, Coleridge, and to some extent even Erskine. The connection is strikingly apparent between such habits as theirs and theological developments we shall hereafter notice. The influence of Erskine upon Maurice, as noticed already, was gratefully acknowledged by the latter, though after all, in some particulars, he differed from his spiritual guide, dropping things which Erskine taught, and taking up beliefs which Erskine never adopted. Maurice's churchmanship could not but make a great difference between him and his friend. Anglican churchmanship of necessity sets limits to the expression, and even to the exercise of thought in some points, in the minds of all who are sincere in their churchmanship. Much freedom of theological opinion obtained after the period I have noticed. A class became numerous, broadly differing from the old Orthodox and the old Evangelical parties, who at the same time also differed from the Anglo-Catholic school of Oxford divines which I am about to describe.

Difficulties and doubts arose as to certain points of historical and doctrinal belief, held most sacred by men of an earlier generation, and by many contemporaries. Historical criticism, busy in many ways, both outside and inside the paths of biblical investigation ; and philosophical methods of inquiry which came so widely into play affected several intelligent and studious men amongst the clergy ; hence men thus influenced, though as staunch in their attachment to the gospel as their brethren could be, were by some of them suspected, if not accused, of being little better than infidels.

But there is an enormous difference between infidelity properly so called, and doubts touching certain matters which lie outside the essentials of the Gospel. What is essential, looking at the subject all round, may be open to question ; but taking as essential the revelation of God's redeeming love through Jesus Christ our Lord,—no one accepting that precious central truth can justly be regarded otherwise than as a true Christian. The denial of the heart respecting that great verity is totally different from the doubt of the intellect respecting other matters.

Those who decidedly opposed Christianity, or who stood altogether outside the profession of its beliefs, I do not describe in this history of English Christendom, because if I entered on that subject it would be difficult to stop ; and if I stated antagonistic opinions it would be needful to controvert them, and to that there would be no end.

I therefore now leave what I have at present to say respecting free theological thoughtfulness to look at those who were distinguished by reverence for Church authority. Free thought within the Church I take as the opposite of submission to what is commonly called Church authority.

It is a remarkable circumstance, as stated by Mr. Farrar in his Bampton Lecture for 1862, that the Oxford movement in the Church of England was at first an Anti-Catholic movement.¹ The Catholic Emancipation Bill, and the liberalism of the Parliament

¹ *Critical History of Free Thought*, p. 401.

after the Reform Act, created an alarm which led to the study of the nonjuring divines and Anglo-Catholics, who had asserted the rights of the Church, and to the reproduction of their opinions. Deeper causes were however at work, among which was the wish to find a more solid groundwork for Church belief; but political circumstances contributed the stimulus, though they were not the cause. Anti-Catholic the Oxford revolution was in the sense of being anti-Roman, but certainly not in the sense of cutting off connection with what is termed the Catholicism of the earlier ages.

In a preceding chapter I have attempted to trace certain influences at work beforehand, preparing for what occurred in 1833. The neglect of theological study; the absence of any provision for instructing men intended for the Church in the principles of Protestantism; to sum up all in a few words, the unfurnished state of mind in which so many were preparing for holy orders, left them exposed to influences which led them into paths leading whither at first they knew not. Had a sound scriptural education been given, had as much attention been paid then to the interpretation of the sacred volume as is happily the case at present; could such a number of ardent spirits have travelled from Oxford to Rome as was the case soon after the Anglo-Catholic revival?

In addition to negative causes, one seemingly of a positive kind may be mentioned. Dr. Lloyd was Regius Professor before he became Bishop of Oxford in 1827. As professor he dwelt upon the distinction

between Romanism as defined in the Council of Trent between 1545-1568, and Romanism as it practically existed in this country and elsewhere when the Reformation commenced in the reign of Henry VIII., who died in 1547. What was the particular doctrinal use which he made of this fact in his University lectures I do not know, but it was employed afterwards in support of the system, and in defence of the proceedings I am about to describe. Two of the leaders acknowledged their obligations to Dr. Lloyd. Dr. Pusey styled him "our revered teacher."¹ Dr. Newman confessed he owed him much. Mr. Gladstone, who was his contemporary at Oxford, speaks of him as "a man of powerful talents, and of a character both winning and decided, who, had his life been spared, might have acted powerfully for good on the fortunes of the Church of England, by guiding the energetic influence which his teaching had done so much to form."² The distinction between Roman Catholicism, as formulated at the Council of Trent, and Anglo-Catholicism co-called, as it existed before the Reformation—a distinction upon which it would appear that Dr. Lloyd was wont to insist—was taken up with great enthusiasm by those whom I am about to describe.

However Dr. Lloyd's influence and other circumstances may have contributed to the crisis, as to master minds which guided the evolution of the change there can be no doubt whatever.

¹ Tract XC., with an historical preface, xxii.

² *A Chapter on Autobiography*, p. 53.

Lincoln College will ever be associated with John Wesley, Pembroke with George Whitefield, and Oriel with those who met there in the common room. "My own brother," says James Anthony Froude, "was at starting the foremost of the party. The Oxford leaders believed that they were fighting against the spirit of the age. They were themselves most completely the creatures of their age. It was one of those periods when Conservative England had been seized with a passion for reform. Parliament was to be reformed ; the municipal institutions were to be reformed ; there was to be an end of monopolies and privileges. The Constitution was to be cut in pieces, and boiled in the Benthamite caldron, from which it was to emerge in immortal youth. In a reformed State, there needed a reformed Church. My brother and his friends abhorred Bentham and all his works. The Establishment in its existing state was too weak to battle with the new enemy. Protestantism was the chrysalis of Liberalism. The Church therefore was to be unprotestantized. The Reformation, my brother said, was a bad setting of a broken limb. The limb needed breaking a second time, and then it would be equal to its business."¹

Against the inquisitive, the rationalistic turn of thought, to say nothing of scientific curiosity and research, these dissatisfied young men could not but fall into an attitude of antagonism. Rebellion against authority, in their view, was the curse of the age—it had been growing worse and worse for three

¹ *Good Words*, January, 1881.

hundred years, through Protestantism it had poisoned the Church, through Radicalism it was poisoning the State. A remedy must be found, or Church and State would soon perish. The remedy was the revival of authority and of obedience to authority. This struck directly at subjective tendencies, though at the same time its abettors clearly gave play to a subjective tendency of their own.

The companion of Richard Hurrell Froude was William Palmer, of Worcester College ; and it is sufficient to say that though he largely sympathised with his friend, he did not go the length which some who were his and Froude's disciples afterwards reached. Froude and Palmer anxiously discussed the state of the Church and the world, in the Oriel common room, "and resolved to form an association for vindicating the rights of the Church, and restoring the knowledge of sound principles."¹ And at the time there was living in the rectory of Hadleigh, in Suffolk, Hugh James Rose, an accomplished scholar, already noticed, whose thought had moved somewhat in the same direction as Froude's. They were the Castor and Pollux of the new enterprise. The rector was already known in literary circles by critical and other works. Hadleigh had been associated with the memory of Taylor, the Marian martyr ; the field where he was burnt was hallowed ground in the eyes of the parishioners ; by a sort of irony this spot, surrounded by a Protestant halo, came to be the cradle of an Anti-Protestant crusade. Rose had

¹ *Dean Hook's Life*, p. 107.

started in 1832 the *British Magazine*, which, under his editorship, and afterwards that of Dr. Maitland, helped to cultivate a spirit of Churchmanship ; and after a conference at Hadleigh his friends parted, in courage and hope, greatly comforted by the influence of the rector, who, to quote the words of Dr. Newman, "when hearts were failing bade us stir up the gift that was in us, and betake ourselves to our true mother."¹ After the conference there were frequent meetings at Oriel, and at length we find John Henry Newman, who was on the Continent when the party were first in consultation, and also John Keble, throwing themselves into what they deemed a Catholic enterprise.

Newman came back from the Continent in July. On the 14th, "Mr. Keble preached the Assize sermon in the University pulpit. It was published under the title of *National Apostacy*. I have ever considered and kept the day as the start of the religious movement of 1833."²

Froude, Palmer, Newman, and Keble issued in the autumn of 1833 *Suggestions for the formation of an Association of Friends of the Church*. "To maintain pure and inviolate the doctrines, the services and the discipline of the Church—that is, to withstand all change which involves the denial and suppression of doctrine, a departure from primitive practice in religious offices, or innovation upon the apostolical prerogatives, order and commission of bishops

¹ Newman's *Apologia*, p. 105.

² *Ibid.*, p. 100.

priests, and deacons; and to afford Churchmen an opportunity of exchanging their sentiments and co-operating together on a large scale." These suggestions were extensively circulated; and taking a leaf out of the enemy's book, they entered a course of agitation. "Mr. Palmer visited several of the large towns to enlist the sympathy of the clergy in the association."¹

Yet though these men were united by common sympathy, they differed from the very beginning. Froude was daring, "not afraid of inferences," prepared to go any length, and to do anything, which could be deduced from his original principles. Rose was cautious, "a conservative," putting existing facts before every other idea. Palmer was the most learned man among them, but "deficient in depth," without insight into the force of personal influence and congeniality of thought in carrying out a religious theory. He stood well in the Church, had extensive connections amongst high dignitaries, and wished for "a committee, an association with rules and meetings to protect the interests of the Church in its existing peril. He was in some measure supported by Mr. Perceval," a Surrey clergyman who had joined the movement at an early stage.

"I, on the other hand," says Newman, "*had out of my own head begun* the Tracts; and these as representing the antagonistic principle of personality were looked upon by Mr. Palmer's friends with considerable alarm." Newman thus explains the origin of

¹ *Dean Hook's Life*, p. 108.

the Oxford Tracts ; and it is not a little curious, that an enterprise for promoting the unity of the Church, for exalting authority on the one hand, and enforcing obedience on the other, should begin with a manifestation of individuality, of irresponsible action, such as would have been striking even in the case of a Protestant full of self-assertion. The fact is, Palmer's friends wished to put down the Tracts as soon as they were issued. Newman himself would have given way, but Keble and Froude urged their continuance. "Mr. Palmer," we are told in the *Apologia*, "shared the anxiety of his own friends, and, kind as were his thoughts of us, he still not unnaturally felt, for reasons of his own, some fidget and nervousness at the course which his Oriel friends were taking. Froude, for whom he had a real liking, took a high tone in his project of measures for dealing with bishops and clergy. As for me, there was matter enough in the early Tracts to give him equal disgust."¹

In "the last days of 1833," Dr. Pusey "showed a disposition to make common cause with Froude, Palmer, Newman, and Keble, and on the 21st of December his tract on *Fasting* appeared as one of the series ; but he was not fully identified with the new proceedings until 1835 and 1836." Dr. Pusey was "a host in himself." He gave "a personality to what without him" was "a sort of mob."² He was at that time the chief theological scholar of the party. He had been at Jena, Gottingen and Bonn, where he read fifteen hours a day, and was now continuing his

¹ *Apologia*, p. 110.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 136-7.

extraordinary attention to the perusal of the Fathers ; a course of study which arose from his apprehension of danger to the Church, not from the Evangelical party, nor from old-fashioned Erastianism, but from his acquaintance with German neology with all its sceptical tendencies.¹ His learning and piety, with other circumstances to be noticed further on, gave him a commanding position which controlled the enterprise when others were separated from the helm.

The general scope of the *Tracts* was thus explained in an advertisement to the first volume : " The apostolic succession, the Holy Catholic Church, were principles of action in the minds of our predecessors of the seventeenth century ; but, in proportion as the maintenance of the Church has been secured by law, her ministers have been under the temptation of leaning on an arm of flesh instead of her own divinely-provided discipline, a temptation increased by political events and arrangements which need not here be more alluded to. A lamentable increase of sectarianism has followed ; being occasioned (in addition to other more obvious causes) first, by the cold aspect which the new Church doctrines have presented to the religious sensibilities of the mind, next to their meagreness in suggesting motives to restrain it from seeking out a more influential discipline."

The *Tracts for the Times* did not formally call attention to German Rationalism, but it is pretty certain that such Rationalism did, in the way of reaction, help on the movement. As there was on the

¹ Letter in *The Times* from a relative, Sept. 26, 1883.

Continent such a fearful shifting from old truths, good men who led the movement sought to secure for themselves a solid ground on which to take up their position, and they unwisely chose the ground of Church authority. Though they did not critically examine any portions of German literature, they did publish a tract on *Rationalistic Principles in Religion*,¹ and that served to indicate the decidedly antagonistic position of Churchliness towards the exercise of what is called Freethought. The same Tracts contained a rather elaborate criticism on Erskine's *Internal Evidence*, and Abbott's *Corner Stone*.

The Tracts were published without uniformity, regularity, or order. The first of them was very short, only two leaves; one later on was a volume of four hundred pages; some are dated, some are not. The stream was intermittent, now came a rill, then, after a pause, rushed forth a flood. Subjects are mixed up in confusion. Classifications are attempted in the volumes, but they are by no means logical. In a general way they may be said to treat of apostolical succession; the Church in its doctrinal principles and history; ordinances, especially baptism; the mysticism of the early Fathers; the doctrine of reserve, the Rationalism of the day, and Romanism. They include extensive catenæ of passages from Anglo-Catholic Fathers, and there is one in the Romish Breviary respecting which in the *Apologia* we have this anecdote: "At a comparatively early date, I

¹ *Tracts for the Times*, No. LXXIII.

drew up the tract on the Roman Breviary. It frightened my own friends on its first appearance. It was an apparent accident which introduced me to the knowledge of that most wonderful and most attractive monument of the devotion of the saints. On Hurrell Froude's death in 1836, I was asked to select one of his books as a keepsake. I selected Butler's *Analogy*. Finding that it had been already chosen, I looked with some perplexity along the shelves as they stood before me, when an intimate friend at my elbow said, 'Take that.' It was the Breviary which Hurrell had with him at Barbadoes. Accordingly I took it, and have it on my table in constant use till this day."¹

Some of the Tracts were poor, some able, some learned, some lively, some dull, some instructive, some common-place, from which little could be gleaned. The catenæ, culled from authors so as to speak in an Anglo-Catholic tone, omitted passages of a different order. Bishop Andrews' Devotions formed a beautiful tract. The tracts on Reserve shocked Protestant feeling. No. LXXXIX., on Patristic Mysticism, is full of learning, but very fanciful, and open to severe criticism. Newman's contributions were amongst the best in a literary point of view. The basis of the whole movement was a return to the principle of Church authority instead of the right of private judgment. Chillingworth's maxim, "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants," was repudiated for that of Vincent of Lerins, "We are

¹ *Apologia*, p. 154.

to believe what has been taught in the Christian Church always, everywhere, and by all." The allegorical modes of explaining Scripture adopted by early Fathers were illustrated and defended. Church creeds were held to be standards of faith, and canons of early councils laws for ecclesiastical practice. The supremacy and infallibility of the Bishop of Rome were plainly denied ; the scholastic doctrines of transubstantiation, purgatory, and the like were rejected ; but the Divine order of bishops, an ecclesiastical priesthood, the efficacy of sacraments, and the real presence in the Eucharist, were upheld with fervour and devotion. All subjects of theology were looked at through a Church medium, and orthodox principles were linked to high sacramental views —a vital relation being supposed to exist between the incarnation and the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Church order and unity were applauded ; and in proportion to the love of Episcopacy, was the aversion to Presbyterianism and Congregationalism ; these being, in the eyes of Tractarians, identical with schism. Records of the Church, No. XXIV., said, that considering the high gifts and strong claims of the Roman Catholic Church, it was difficult to "refrain from being melted into tenderness, and rushing into its communion ;" and Dr. Wiseman, then Bishop of Mellipotamos, might well say : "We may depend upon a willing and able, and a most zealous co-operation on the part of the Tractarians with any effort we may make toward bringing the Anglican Church into her rightful position in catholic unity with the Holy See. It is impossible to read the works of the Oxford divines

without discovering a daily approach towards our Holy Church." ¹

In a few words, the Oxford doctrines were these: That Holy Scripture is not the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice; that the traditional teaching of the Church, as well as the New Testament, is a part of the Word of God; that the existence of the true ministry of the Gospel depends on apostolical succession; that the visible Catholic Church of Christ is bounded by a connection with that line of ministerial descent; that the grace of God which saves the soul is "ordinarily" conveyed through the medium of the sacraments; that they are more, much more, than spiritual symbols, being really Divine occult powers, working wonders beyond the reach of nature; that these cannot be effectually administered by any who are not in the chain of apostolical succession; that we are justified by baptism, and not by faith alone; that baptism possesses regenerating power; that the body and blood of Christ are really present in the Eucharist; that reserve is to be maintained in the public ministry of the Gospel; and that though the popish doctrines of purgatory, pardons, images, relics, and invocation of saints, are contrary to Scripture, and the articles of the Church of England, yet there is a kind of purgatory, a method of priestly pardon, a species of reverence for images and relics, and a certain form of saintly invocation which may be maintained in harmony with both.

¹ Letter on Catholic Unity.

Looking at the date 1833, when the Tracts first appeared, impulses which moved the writers are not far to seek. Some are indicated by the authors themselves. A strong reaction set itself up against the Reform Bill and its immediate consequences ; for, in the estimation of High Churchmen, parliamentary changes then made first in the State and next in the Ecclesiastical Establishment were thoroughly infidel and revolutionary. A feeling arose such as was expressed by an eloquent preacher, who putting together anti-religious and republican sentiments, spoke of anarchists who would “ leap upon our altars that they might batter at our thrones.”¹

Erastian government as it was called, and the suppression of bishoprics in Ireland ; also the institution, by the civil power, of a Jerusalem diocese, to be held in turn by an Anglican and a Lutheran,—thus striking, it was thought, at the root of Church principles—these things roused no little indignation in the tract writers. They thought that foundations were destroyed, and asked, “ What shall the righteous do ? ” Attacks on Episcopacy and its associations further inflamed their zeal. The current of rationalism which was flowing in, though not much noticed in the Tracts, and the assertion of the right of private judgment, not only as to the interpretation of Scripture, but as to the truth of Christianity itself, strengthened the rising reaction. The neglect of Church buildings, the slovenliness of worship, and the disgraceful state of psalmody deepened a desire for revived reverence

¹ The Rev. H. Melville, *Spital Sermon for 1831.*

in the house of God, and in its liturgical services. When, moreover, the earnest movers in this matter—who, however mistaken, had an honest zeal for religion,—looked on prevalent clerical apathy, and on the spiritual indifference of laymen, the spectacle appeared so painful that they could not help making an effort, in their own way, to change the face of society.

It is said that behind and through other evils Dissent, old and new, had penetrated, and it needed now to be met and repelled by the enforcement of decided Church doctrines. Besides, it is alleged that Evangelicalism had to do with the Catholic reaction; but how it could have any direct connection with it except in the way of strenuous opposition, I cannot imagine. There is no historical, no spiritual link whatever between the Evangelical revival, under Newton and Scott, with the rest of the band at the beginning of the century, and the rise and progress of the Oxford movement. Religious earnestness in one form may provoke religious earnestness in another, as between Liberals and Conservatives there may be reciprocal efforts through political rivalries, but it is an abuse of language to speak of the two opposite religious revivals as related in any other way than that.

Party feeling at that time ran very high, and selfish motives were by many attributed to the Oxford leaders. It used to be said, men undermining the Establishment went on eating the Church bread—they had an eye to the loaves and fishes. Now that we can calmly look back upon the strifes

of fifty years, if we judge impartially we must admit that those who led, and many who followed, must have been disinterested in choosing their unhappy course. They had nothing to gain, but much to lose. Preferment had been bestowed as a reward for learning—for “editing Greek plays,” as the saying went; but after the Reform Bill passed, Liberal politics, on the part of a clergyman, proved no small recommendation to a deanery or a bishopric. A High Church Tory was no favourite with the new ministry, and all anti-whiggism was at a discount. Identification with the Oxford enterprise could be no help but rather a hindrance to an ambitious man in holy orders. It was with much reluctance that some, who ultimately joined the Roman communion, took the final step; they cast many a longing lingering look behind. Frederick William Faber, who did not enter the Church of Rome till the close of the half-century, tells us in the preface to his *Hymns*, after he became priest of the oratory—“Catholics even are said to be sometimes found poring with a devout and unsuspecting delight over the verses of the Olney hymns, which the author himself can remember acting like a spell upon him for years strong enough to be for long a counter influence to very grave convictions, and even now to come back from time to time unbidden into the mind.¹ The steps by which he approached Romanism may be traced through his interesting *Sights and Thoughts in Foreign Churches, and among Foreign Peoples.* ■

¹ Preface to the edition of 1849.

² Published in 1842.

CHAPTER III.

BISHOPS AND CHURCH ACTIVITY.

1830-1837.

DR. CAREY was translated from Exeter to St. Asaph in 1830, and the same year Dr. Bethell, author of *A General View of the Doctrine of Regeneration in Baptism*, who succeeded Dr. Carey, was translated to Bangor; at the beginning of the next year he was followed on the bench by Dr. Phillpotts. No other bishop in those days was so much talked of. At the age of fifteen he had been elected to a scholarship at Oxford, and at eighteen had won the Chancellor's prize for an English essay. Whilst chaplain as a young man to Dr. Barrington, Bishop of Durham, he entered into controversy with the Roman Catholic historian, Dr. Lingard, and afterwards published pamphlets in defence of the clergy, on whom reflections had been cast by distinguished Whig noblemen. He became known as a valorous champion of the Established Church, and of high Tory principles, and a letter of his against Catholic Emancipation, addressed to Mr. Canning, in 1827, created great excitement. It was read with admiration by those opposed to the measure, and procured for the author the reward of a deanery. The Bishopric

of Exeter was soon afterwards offered him, and he was welcomed in the House of Lords, as an eloquent advocate of Conservative opinions, both political and ecclesiastical. After his elevation he continued vigorously to employ his pen, and his pamphlets altogether cover twelve pages in the British Museum catalogue. He opposed the Reform Bill, the Irish Church Bill, the Poor Law Bill, the National Education Bill, and the appointment of the Ecclesiastical Commission. He was remarkable in appearance, having eyes like a hawk, and a countenance suffused with an intense expression of intelligent power. I vividly, at this moment, remember seeing him, when I was a young man. He was the sort of person one could never forget. Stories of bigotry were told of him in abundance, and if he was severe in criticising the Whigs, the Whigs were equally severe in criticising him. I should gather from private anecdotes I heard at the time, that he was a conscientious man, bold in rebuking what he felt to be wrong, and though a sturdy opponent of Dissent, kind to individual Dissenters, one of them being a trusted servant in his employ. He disliked the Evangelical party, whom he pronounced inconsistent Churchmen, more than he did those who were considered by him to be conscientious Nonconformists.

The same year as that in which Phillpotts obtained a bishopric witnessed the transfer of Dr. Carr from Chichester to Worcester, and the consecration of the learned Dr. Maltby in his room. In 1832 Dr. Grey became Bishop of Hereford; and then, after a considerable interval when no disposal of sees fell to

the lot of the prime minister for the time being, four vacancies occurred. Dr. Butler, after a successful career as schoolmaster, was made Bishop of Lichfield; Dr. Maltby was translated to Durham; Dr. Allen exchanged Bristol for Ely; and at Chichester Dr. Otter took the place of Dr. Maltby. "The first great manifestation of activity, in the Church as a body, dates from the episcopate of Bishop Otter. This was not solely due to the character of the man. The Church of England, as a whole, was waking up to a sense of her duties; but Bishop Otter was well qualified to guide this spirit of revived activity, in the diocese over which it was his lot to preside, and, as a matter of fact, the work of church building, enlargement, and restoration, the erection of schools, the increase in the number of clergy, and other outward signs of activity mainly began in his day." The foundation of the Theological College at Chichester was owing to this bishop and Dean Chandler. These appointments to the four vacancies I have mentioned occurred in 1836. The union of Gloucester and Bristol then took place, and Dr. Monk was the first to preside over the combined sees; Dr. Longley was chosen for the restored see of Ripon the same year, and Dr. Stanley for the diocese of Norwich in 1837.

The previous revenues of the Church were not accurately ascertained until the Royal Commission appointed by William IV. published them to the world. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Durham had over £19,000 a year each; the Archbishop of York had over £11,000; the Bishops of London, Winchester, and Ely had about the same;

Rochester had not more than £1,500, Llandaff only £900. "The revenues of the cathedrals and collegiate churches were on such a scale that the commissioners had no hesitation in reporting that the objects of those institutions might be fully secured and continued, and their efficiency maintained, consistently with a considerable reduction of their revenues, a portion of which should be appropriated towards making a better provision for the cure of souls."¹ There was a deficiency of churches, and of clergy to supply them, in large towns. Parishes containing over 160,000 persons had church room provided for not more than 8,000. In many cases there was not income enough to support an incumbent. There were 300 livings of less annual value than fifty pounds, more than two thousand under a hundred pounds, and between three and four thousand under one hundred and fifty. And while there was paucity in some cases, there was repletion in others. Two hundred livings were above a thousand a year. One in Durham reached £5,000. One in the diocese of Ely over £7,000. What was done for the rectification of this state of things has been briefly stated in a former chapter. The anomalies just indicated show the revenues of bishoprics at the beginning of the reign, and demonstrate the need there was for the work entrusted to the hands of the commissioners.

Various kinds of work followed the exposure. Foremost amongst them was the erection of new places of worship. Large sums had been voted by

¹ *The State of the Church*, by the Hon. Arthur Elliot, p. 101.

Parliament for a few sacred edifices reared in the earlier part of the century, but now that source began to be dried up. The Ecclesiastical Commission, however, took this and kindred matters in hand, and proved a more effective as well as a more appropriate agency. In another department, many years afterwards, the commissioners challenged Church people, offering £150,000 to meet equal benefactions for the augmentation of poor livings, and the result was the contribution of £300,000 in one year. Trustworthy statistics show the rapid increase of Voluntaryism in the Church of England ever since. New churches arose everywhere among a growing population; parishes were divided, and endowments founded for additional clergy. "In twenty years, from 1831 to 1851, more than 2,000 new churches were erected at an expense exceeding six millions."¹ Consequently church building became a subject of diligent study, and the anti-gothic spirit of the former century melted away before a revival which sprung from an inquiry into details and principles of architecture during the ages before the Reformation. The Anglo-Catholic feeling had much to do with the change, but it is a mistake to suppose it was altogether of ecclesiastical significance. It was æsthetic as well. Taste did not make rapid strides between 1830 and 1837, but its new course had begun, and an appreciation of beauty and fitness gradually became more and more apparent. The hideous chapel of ease style gave place to plans

¹ May's *Constit. Hist.*, iii. p. 216. Numerous statistics on the subject are found in this useful work.

founded on Norman, early English, and decorated precedents ; and church building and Church restoration began to proceed hand and hand together. A good specimen of architecture arose in St. Dunstan's in the West, Fleet Street, the steeple being copied from the Church of St. Helen at York. At the same time the old clock projecting over the street,—as that at Bow Church, Cheapside, with two curious figures which attracted the attention of passers-by,—disappeared ; that circumstance being an example of a double change then on the advance, the passing away of the old to make way for the new. Another ecclesiastical building, Christ Church, Westminster, not long afterwards added an instance of improving taste ; its beautiful spire being one of the principal achievements of the kind at that period. Up and down the country, on grassy hills, and in wooded dales, places of worship, strikingly superior to the productions of previous years, began to adorn our charming English landscapes. John Britton and the Pugins contributed largely to progress made in this department of art ; and it is remarkable that Augustine Pugin the son, who became a Roman Catholic, should contemporaneously with a much older man, Thomas Rickman, originally a Quaker, have done, by writings and practical work, so much for the advancement of that by which the Church of England has been greatly benefited. Pugin, however, constructed buildings chiefly for his own communion, but Rickman built a large number of edifices for the use of the Protestant Episcopal Establishment. Yet, after all, the architects under William IV., in

numbers and in activity, if not in skill, have been exceeded by successors under Queen Victoria.

The two old Institutes, the Christian Knowledge and the Propagation of the Gospel Societies, kept on their way. The former continued to circulate the Holy Scripture and the Prayer-book, and to prepare publications on religious subjects. Those publications were stamped by a character different from that of the Religious Tract Society. It was easy to distinguish between issues from the two depots. The Christian Knowledge had long been of the same type as "The whole Duty of Man" and the writings of Robert Nelson; and a prudent care to avoid anything offensive, anything open to criticism, during the early part of the century is said to have presided over all new publications. If any member objected to a phrase, that phrase was expunged, and the result was that "such publications did not express anything likely to appeal very strongly to the passions or even the best feelings of those for whom the works were intended." "I believe," added Archbishop Tait, who used these words at the opening of the Society's new and magnificent house in Northumberland Avenue, Charing Cross, November, 1879, "the experience of a great many years has convinced most people that this endeavour to avoid criticism generally ends in the severest criticism that can be passed." Whatever could be said of the earlier works of the Society, it began to take a fresh start about the time when other Church agencies caught a new inspiration. Certainly for some years past the publications of the Christian Knowledge Society have been of a high character for

learning and public adaptation. And as in architecture so in literature ; what has been done during the present reign far surpasses what was accomplished during the former one. The agitations of fifty years ago could not but be as winds stirring the face of quiet waters, and the Institution now named felt in some measure the general effect experienced by the age.

The society's work had long been of a somewhat multifarious character, and the Bishop of Durham, at the opening of the new building just referred to, thus describes its manifold and comprehensive agencies :— “Here it busies itself with the translation of the Scriptures, and there with the publication of educational works ; here it aids in building schools, and there it is active in training teachers ; here it contributes gifts to libraries, and there again it offers prizes for proficiency in scholars. In one place it assists in the endowment of a colonial bishopric, and in another in the foundation of a missionary college. At one time it provides passage money for some evangelist emigrant, and at another it watches over the interests of some zenana mission.” This description applies more to the society in the present than in the past, but it is quoted here to show the comprehensiveness of its design, that it was intended for missionary purposes, as well as the diffusion of literature ; and the former as well as the latter object it pursued in the reign of William IV. Much of the work in India and elsewhere, which it did formerly, it handed over in the course of time to its daughter the Propagation Society, but it still continued to

work in aid of missionary endeavours. It helped out of its own resources to create and assist new colonial sees.

This leads me to mention what was done in that department during William the Fourth's reign.

Madras was taken out of the Diocese of Calcutta, and constituted by patent in 1835. Dr. Corrie was then made bishop. Dr. Spencer succeeded him in 1837. The presidency of Bombay, excluding Scinde, in that year was carved out of the original Church territory of Calcutta. Dr. Carr appears as the first bishop. Whilst Calcutta lost some of its domain, it became enriched by the transfer to itself of a college founded by Government on the banks of the Hooghly. It was designed for literary purposes, as well as for the reception of missionaries on their arrival in India, and to its erection the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the Propagation Society, and the Bible Society liberally contributed.

A bishopric was founded in Australia in 1836. Dr. Broughton came to England in 1834, and represented the spiritual destitution of the settlement. He was consecrated, and followed to Sydney by ten clergymen. All the new Episcopal movements were aided by the two old Church of England societies. The total number of clergymen employed by the Propagation Society in 1837 was two hundred and thirty-five.

The Church Missionary Society at the same time carried on work in Africa and India, employing there eighty clerical agents, and three hundred and forty-four native labourers. The first missionary who visited the district of Nuddea, Bengal, was Mr. Deerr,

who preached to one of the Indian sects called "Worshippers of the Creator." "In 1833 thirty persons of this sect were baptized by Mr. Deerr in the face of much persecution, and from that time the movement towards Christianity began to gather strength, till in 1838 no less than six hundred families, comprising about three thousand souls, came forward and placed themselves under Christian instruction; and when Bishop Wilson visited the spot in the autumn of 1839, as many as nine hundred persons were baptized on one occasion. The movement had then extended to fifty-five villages, and embraced over three thousand souls. Great hopes were naturally entertained that in a few years the bulk of the population would become Christians, but the subsequent history of the Mission has not realized the expectations at first formed." Six years ago the actual number of Christians on the roll was 5,577, but the communicants did not amount to more than one-tenth. The district of Tinnevelly, at the southern part of the Indian peninsula,—with its sandy plain of a fiery red colour, and its oases created by water near the surface, covered by groves of tall, straight palmyra trees,—is the Goshen of the Church Missionary Institution. From the palmyra climbers the converts have been chiefly drawn, and in 1840 they numbered twelve thousand people.

Rev. Samuel Marsden was a distinguished worker in connection with the Church Missionary Society. He visited New Zealand in his 73rd year. "On his arrival hundreds of the natives flocked around him, delighted once more to see the man who forty years

ago had adopted this island in his affections, and, during all that period, had been in every way seeking their temporal and spiritual benefit. One chief, unable to come at him, on account of the crowds daily surrounding him at his first place of landing, followed him forty miles across the country, for the purpose of having more quiet religious conversation."¹

The Church of England at this period was doing a good work in many ways, both at home and abroad. "Whilst occupying the same ground," says a contemporary American critic, "retaining just about the same number of clergy, and the same resources, she has become almost new in everything pertaining to an efficient Church of Christ. Her growth has not been that of a fire strengthening by the putting on of fresh fuel, but of a fire reviving out of its own ashes. It has been remarkably a revival of religion among the clergy, and that, not by a gradual rolling onward of the wave of godly influence from one part to another, through an agency of second causes distinctly manifest, but by the starting up of the evidences of new life, and the shooting forth of the fruits of new growth simultaneously in various parts, without connection with each other, and remarkably without visible influence." "This has taken place at a time when in every Protestant Church in Europe out of Great Britain the cause of spiritual religion has been deplorably on the wane; when Geneva was sinking lower and lower into Socinianism, Germany into neological scepticism, and the Reformed Churches

¹ *Church Missionary Society Report for 1837-8.*

into a compound of both."¹ It is remarkable that these statements should be made so soon after the passing of reform measures in Church and State, thought by many to be of a destructive character. Not that the spiritual revival should be traced to them, for it was beginning some time before ; but it must be acknowledged that some of the obstacles in the path of religious efficiency had been removed by new parliamentary measures. Nor should it be overlooked, that attacks upon the Establishment then vigorously made, were not directed against Episcopalian activity and zeal, but against the alliance between Church and State ; moreover a powerful impetus was given to Episcopalian activity by the removal of acknowledged evils rife at the moment when the Nonconformist crusade commenced.

¹ *New York Review*, April, 1838.

CHAPTER IV.

TYPICAL CHURCHMEN.

1830-1837.

BY the two main currents of opinion, noticed in a former chapter, the old lines of distinction between Orthodox and Evangelical were more or less swept away. The effect of the first cause was not so apparent for a time as the effect of the second. Anglo-Catholicism made itself felt in the Church of England before what is called Free thought came widely into play. At least three tendencies became apparent in the reign of William IV., and they are seen distinctly advancing afterwards. They have been denominated by three popular but rather inaccurate terms, High Church, Low Church, Broad Church. The words serve their purpose in a rough way, after a fashion prevalent in an age when things are hastily looked at, and names are hastily given.

The study of Church history at this era begins to be more perplexing than ever. It partakes of the character of political geography. Conflicts occur, battles are lost or won, old leagues are broken up, new combinations are formed, lands are discovered, territories are divided, names are changed, and we scarcely know where we are. The map we strive to

construct is covered with confused lines. I must endeavour as well as I can to trace three groups.

A large number of Anglo-Catholics remained attached to the Church of England. They had never formed a Macedonian phalanx. Differences of opinion and strong elements of individuality had existed throughout. It has been seen in Dr. Newman's case, and individualism continued to operate after the last tract had done its work. Representative Anglo-Catholics, who did not enter the Church of Rome, are found in Keble, Pusey, and Hook.

Why Keble remained in the Establishment is not very clear. But his work and influence in other respects than in immediate connection with the Tractarian controversy is what comes before us now.

In 1836 he published a new edition of Hooker's Works. Hooker is a great name in the English Church, and justly so, for he was one of the grandest theological thinkers Christendom ever saw. It would have been a signal achievement, to show that the principles he taught countenanced the attempt made at Oxford; Keble did not make this his professed object, but he aimed in his editorial remarks at two things; one of which he accomplished, but failed as to the other. He showed that the Calvinism of Hooker was of a modified description, that so far he was free from the Genevan odium. Anti-Calvinistic he could not prove him to be, but a difference as to Predestination between "the judicious" divine and the framers of the Lambeth Articles he clearly established, and he pointed out further deviations in

the writings of the English Churchman from the teaching of the French reformer. But Keble is less successful, indeed it appears to me he fails altogether, when endeavouring to clear Hooker's theory of political and ecclesiastical power from charges of Erastianism,¹ a fearful taint in Anglo-Catholics' eyes. The High Churchman is seen in the *Life of Wilson*, Bishop of Sodor and Man, in all respects a most interesting book. Wilson was a typical Anglican, carrying out his ideal in the administration of a tiny diocese where he could, yet not without difficulty, and with some personal eccentricities, bring all questions of ritual and discipline under his own control. The biographer would have liked to see such bishops as his hero multiplied in the English Establishment; and doubtless, whatever political strife might have arisen out of it, such men would have exhibited the saintliness of primitive Christendom, and would have brought English dioceses nearer than they ever have been to the ecclesiastical type of the third century. Whether Keble would, like Wilson, have given permission to Dissenters to receive the Communion sitting, I do not know. There was no doubt in Keble, as in Wilson, "a saintly simplicity and sweetness." At all events he was a rigid Anglo-Catholic, and "the real presence" in the sacrament, whatever those words may mean, and "the adoration" of that "real presence," were held by John Keble, if ever they were held by any one.² His life at Hursley

¹ *Hooker's Works*, Keble's edition, vol. I., lxxii. *et seq.* and cvi.

² *Stanley's Essays*, p. 611.

was strangely overlooked in his own time, and has been strangely overlooked since; and yet he was an exemplary “parish priest,” striving to do what he considered to be his Lord and Master’s work in a humble out-of-the-way Hampshire village. “Considering his world-wide fame, considering also his deep interest in the questions which agitated the ecclesiastical mind, and the respect in which, on those questions, he was held as an oracle by half of the English clergy, there is something inexpressibly touching in the quiet, unostentatious humility with which he contented himself with his limited sphere.” Matters of interest amongst his parishioners, trivial to others, were to him “as important as though there were no other cares, no other concerns, than those of the cottagers of the Hampshire downs.”¹ It is curious, as illustrative of his want of sympathy with Puritans of all sorts, that he never refers, in anything he published, to the fact that Richard Cromwell spent thirty years of his life at Hursley, and is buried in the church; and it is also curious, as illustrative of the position assumed by the Government towards the Tractarians, that no prebendal stall was ever offered him. After all, it is not as a Tractarian, not as an Anglo-Catholic, not as an anti-Puritan, that Keble will live in the memory of Englishmen, but as a Christian poet. The popularity of his *Christian Year*, now as great as ever amongst all denominations, is quite wonderful; and it is a fact worthy of notice as indicating that width of Evangelical alliance which

¹ *Stanley’s Essays*, p. 594.

may be obtained through the medium of hymnology, that there is no hymn more commonly sung on Sunday evenings in nonconformist churches than one written by him.¹

Pusey, like Keble, remained in the Church of England. This is not surprising. He was a man of decided views from the commencement of the crisis, and had one fixed purpose all the way through, which was to restore *throughout* the Church of England, if possible, the influence of *Anglo*, not Roman Catholic principles. His opinions were stereotyped. He did not, like Newman, believe in theological development. Nicene divinity was with him a type of thought for all ages. He bowed to the authority of the Church at that period. He was very learned, very studious, and perhaps read the Fathers more than any one else then did ; but, like Thomas Aquinas and other schoolmen, he made all he knew tributary to the maintenance of certain fixed doctrines, and never wished to break bounds. All this qualified him to be a leader, and inspired confidence in the minds of his followers ; and when we think of his learning, his decision of character, and his eminent piety, together with his University position and family connexions, all wonder at his name having been given to the movement melts away. Though it is overstepping the chronological limits of this chapter, I may notice that he became involved in trouble through a sermon on the Eucharist, in which he propounded the doctrine of the real presence, so as to get very near

¹ "Sun of my soul," etc.

the dogma of transubstantiation as fixed by the Lateran Council. The author was suspended from his University preachership. But the University authorities also fell into trouble through their action in this matter, and Justice Coleridge, Dr. Hook, and Mr. Gladstone expressed themselves as dissentients. It is amongst the many curiosities of the period, that at the consecration of St. John the Baptist's Church, in the parish of Hawarden, now well known from its being the residence of the present Prime Minister of England, Dr. Hook preached a sermon which he afterwards published; and in a dedication to Dr. Pusey expresses admiration "for the profound learning, the unimpeachable orthodoxy, and the Christian temper with which, in the midst of a faithless and pharisaical generation, he had maintained the cause of true religion, and preached the pure and unadulterated word of God."

Dr. Hook always stood outside the Tractarian party, taking the liberty of praising and blaming as he thought fit; in this respect resembling Dr. Johnson, who wished to monopolize all criticism relative to David Garrick. Hook would let nobody either laud or find fault with Pusey, but he was not sparing himself in the delivery of both favourable and adverse judgments on the Oxford controversy. His individuality, and his practical assertion of the right of private judgment was as pronounced as that of any Puritan or Nonconformist in the land.

This independence, connected with High Churchmanship, appeared in all he said and did. His work as a parish clergyman is a subject which cannot be

omitted in a History of English Religion. He became vicar of Holy Trinity, Coventry, in 1829, and there he laboured indefatigably for eight years, and wrought a surprising change in the state of his parish. But it was in Leeds, whither he went in 1837, that he put forth his greatest power. There he remained for above twenty years. "He found it one parish, he left it many parishes ; he found it with fifteen churches, he left it with thirty-six ; he found it with three schools, he left it with thirty ; he found it with six parsonage houses, he left it with twenty-nine." He engaged in all sorts of benevolent work, and to promote the moral and religious welfare of the townspeople he became a teetotaller. A characteristic anecdote is told of him in this connexion. He persuaded a drunkard to become a total abstainer, without taking the pledge. "Let us try the plan together for six months," he said, "and see how we get on." "Ah," said the man ; "but how is each to know whether the other is keeping his resolution ?" "It is easily done," said the vicar, "you come and ask my missus once a month, and I will go and ask yours." He was just the kind of man to get on equally well with the upper and lower classes. He was, while at Leeds, necessarily thrown much amongst Dissenters, and between him and them there arose open controversies. Hard battles were fought. He never failed to speak his mind, and without circumlocution he would tell people what he meant. He used to say that schism was a sin, but that every schismatic was not a sinner, for he might not act with a schismatical intent. He would unchurch Nonconformity, but he did not un-

christianize Nonconformists. Some of them he treated as intimate friends, all of them as neighbours to be regarded with kindness. He could write letters on the good and evil of the Established Church, and on the advantages and evils of an established religion ; and he always distinguished between his Church as episcopal, and his Church as connected with the state, also between religion as an individual matter, and religion as, in his estimation and according to his idea, essential to the welfare of the political state.

After his retirement to Chichester he loved to talk over old times, and tell of his work and warfare at Leeds, like the old soldier described by Goldsmith. He would stroll in the Deanery garden, and the fields beyond, and describe how he got time for study by rising at five in the morning, and working hard before breakfast ; for he said, at ten o'clock the knocking at the Leeds vicarage door began, and incessant parochial claims kept him busy till ten o'clock at night. Also he related how, whilst bold in maintaining Church principles, he visited Nonconformists, and was drinking tea with a dissenting minister when he received an offer of the Chichester Deanery ; how he took a leaf out of Methodism, and instituted gatherings amongst his parishioners something like class meetings ; how whilst he vastly preferred Anglican divines, he had read with profit the writings of Nonconformists, and held in high estimation certain preachers whom he knew ; and how with his High Church views he coupled an earnest, almost Lutheran belief in the doctrine of justification by

faith. Memories of his warm-hearted English hospitality, of his John Bull-like characteristics, and of his catholic piety—which caused him to sympathise with spiritually minded Dissenters, though he was emphatic but not rude in his disapproval of nonconformist ecclesiastical polity—are cherished by me with much affection ; and I look forward, with delightful hope, to the “all-reconciling world,” as John Howe called it, where present controversies will melt away in the sunshine of new revelations.

Dr. Hook wrote a number of works whilst at Leeds, which prove his industry and his sturdy Anglicanism. “The Lives of the Archbishops,” through which as an author he will be best known by posterity, were not commenced till late in life. The publication which attracted most notice at the time now referred to, was his sermon on the text “Hear the Church.” In it he asserted what he considered to be the apostolicity of the Church to which he belonged, and the consequent claims of its doctrines and discipline. He did this perhaps with a boldness not common even at that period ; but there was really nothing in it so able, so extravagant, or so erratic, as to account for the excitement it produced. The heated state of the ecclesiastical atmosphere alone explains the warmth of the controversy. A hundred thousand copies were sold. Replies of all sorts issued from the press. Nobody was more surprised at this than the preacher. I remember hearing stories of the Queen’s displeasure, but Dr. Hook said he received no manifestation of it, being simply informed that she seemed to feel what she heard was new as well as

momentous. His High Churchism, he knew very well, and frankly confessed, did not win favours at court ; so that to deliver such a sermon, under such circumstances, indicated more moral courage than worldly discretion.¹

There was another typical Churchman who in Windsor, during the reign of William IV., did a great work, and so prepared for subsequent high office. George Augustus Selwyn, as I have been told by Cambridge men, through his skill and mastery in boating, and by the art he had acquired of ruling his crew, fitted himself for mastership in other ways. I knew him before he became a bishop. His conversations will never be effaced from my memory. He insisted much on apostolical succession and the efficacy of sacraments ; but he was of those who, with all this, maintained friendly relations, not indeed towards Nonconformity, but towards Nonconformists. There was an honesty in all his intercourse with those who differed from him which inspired respect. He was full of moral courage, and had an unmistakably strong will. He carried out his purposes with earnestness and decision, and made it plain in his early years that his object was to wake up the English Church from its lethargy and indifference. During his residence at Eton he did a great work at Windsor, and though neither vicar nor curate, he was the soul of all spiritual movement in the parish and neighbourhood. Many of the parishioners had been in the habit of attending the dissenting chapel on a Sunday evening,

¹ *Dean Hook, his Life and Letters*, p. 253.

there being at the time Episcopalian worship only morning and afternoon; but he carried on a revolution by undertaking at the parish church a third service, when he gathered within the walls a crowded congregation. Those who had been long accustomed to the ministrations of the gentlemanly incumbent, who typified the respectable but not over zealous order of clergymen, were somewhat startled at Mr. Selwyn's vigorous proceedings, whilst other Church people rejoiced because of them, and thanked God for what they spoke of as an apostolic revival. His pleasant countenance, uniting amiability with inflexible decision, his musical voice, and his active habits embodying the ideas of muscular Christianity—all this being much talked about, made way for him wherever he went, and his popularity secured extraordinary influence.

In the work of education he took a lively interest, and though we could not agree in a scheme for those above a certain age, we co-operated in the establishment and maintenance of an infant school.

When he was promoted to the colonial bishopric of New Zealand, he threw himself with characteristic ardour into preparation for his great enterprise; and I remember his talking to me in his rooms at Eton College about South Sea versions of Scripture which he wished to study during his outward voyage; and the admiration he expressed for the heroism of John Williams, the martyr of Eromanga, whom he referred to as an apostolic bishop, albeit he had received only Nonconformist orders. I may venture to add that friendly intercourse after the lapse of years was

renewed after he became Bishop of Lichfield, and that I found him then the same earnest and devoted, the same bold yet humble-minded man which he had been in the days of his youth.

Work executed by Hook and Selwyn represents much which was done by others. The Church was aroused from its slumbers, and set itself diligently to promote long neglected interests. As I have remarked, churches were built, services were multiplied, preaching was more earnest, old national schools were improved, and new ones were established in destitute districts. A high Church tinge was given to these efforts—chanting became more common ; music was much studied ; surpliced choirs were formed ; and sisterhoods for beneficent and religious purposes were established. Ritualism, in a very pronounced form, did not appear until after the period to which this chapter belongs.

We must now turn to the second general division which begins to present different types.

Anglo-Catholics wanted cohesion, but old Evangelicals, the Romaines, the Newtons, the Scotts, the Cecils, were of one heart and of one soul. The Evangelicals, however, of tractarian times and afterwards were not of the same compact and united order. Not that they carried on controversies with each other, but they caught the spirit of individualism, and some pursued ways of their own.

The venerable Charles Simeon lingered on this side eternity until 1836, not mixing himself with existing disputes, but patiently waiting for his dear Lord and Master, saying, “I take the glorious and majestic

discoveries which God has made to me of Himself, *and there I rest.*" He would smilingly add, as he was wont to do when making strong statements about which he had no doubt, "I may be wrong in my view, though I think I am not; but however, this I know, that I am a poor lost and vile sinner, yea the chief of sinners, and the greatest monument of God's mercy, and I know I cannot be wrong here."

Dean McNeile, Dean Close, and Canon Stowell, denominating them by their subsequent titles, were decidedly anti-tractarian, and came out as authors in the midst of the controversy; but it was as preachers mainly that they made a mark on their age. The voice of the first of these men was wonderfully fine, and he was much given to the exposition of prophecy and the denunciation of popery. The second for some time maintained a conspicuous position in the fashionable town of Cheltenham; and the third published several books, and was well known and greatly applauded at Exeter Hall and elsewhere as a platform speaker. Charles Bradley, a popular clergyman at High Wycombe, Clapham, and Glastonbury, who published sermons which ran through several editions, may be added to the list of Evangelicals. The Hon. Baptist Noel ought to be specially named. He continued in the Establishment until 1848, when he seceded and became a Baptist minister. His plain evangelical preaching, extemporary it seemed in thought and word, reminded many of what was said to Ezekiel—"And lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an

instrument." The silvery strain was attractive, touching, and quickening ; and the simplicity of his life and conversation harmonized with his pulpit utterances. He eschewed abstruse theological questions, not only in public but in ministerial conferences, where the part he took strikingly contrasted with profound reflections and inquiries advanced by some of his brethren.¹

At the time when the names just mentioned rang throughout England, there lived in the county of Leicester a clergyman little known, who associated with strong evangelical convictions peculiarities of opinion, such as I do not remember to have met with elsewhere. He received as truths the facts of man's natural corruption, of justification by faith alone, of the one complete atonement made by Christ as the substitute for sinners, of the absolute necessity for an entire change of nature before men can live to God through Christ, and of the origin of their salvation in an election of Divine grace. These he continued to teach more and more fully to the end of his work in 1859. "He was," says his biographer, "to the last an Evangelical of 1810, not of 1860 ;" and it is added, "his course was different from that which the body has pursued, it was one of continual inquiry and study of God's written Word, not for the defence of his own position, but for the purpose of learning more of the truth ; and it led him to discern and teach

¹ I was struck with this once at a private debate in which John Howard Hinton, Thomas Binney, and Charles Stovell took leading parts.

many truths which the earlier Evangelicals did not understand; some which have since been taught, or are now beginning to be taught, by other members of our Church, and some of which modern Evangelicals are so distrustful, so ready to stigmatise as unsound, Romanising or Germanising, before they have well understood what they are."¹ In accordance with this general statement, I find him holding what would be considered High Church views of baptism, and at the same time declaring that visible Churches, as distinguished from the Invisible Church, are in a condition of apostasy. Again he says, "There is no greater proof of the denial of the Spirit's guidance and presence than maintaining the necessity of an apostolical succession."² "I much question," he remarks in another place, "the wisdom of making one form of worship the bond of union instead of our articles. Certainly it would be externally a union, an assemblage of people together, but not necessarily anything further."³ Indications are found in his life of both High Churchism and Broad Churchism so called, in combination with intensely Calvinistic beliefs, the whole forming a rare example of clerical independence and individuality. With regard to Broad Churchmen "it is scarcely possible," says his biographer, "for a disciple of his to read any of their works, without continually meeting trains of thought and declarations of truths that run altogether

¹ *Records of the Ministry of the Rev. E. T. March Phillips, M.A. (1862.)*

² *Ibid.*, p. 319.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

parallel with his teaching.”¹ No wonder that he was “left alone amongst evangelical ministers.” They suspected and found fault with him. He however enjoyed the friendship of Mr. Vaughan, Vicar of St. Martin’s, Leicester, when Mr. Phillipps “had, like him, far outrun the views of the evangelical clergy, amongst whom his lot was cast; and from that time he met with very few with whom he could communicate on the truths he was investigating, who could enter into his mind, or respond to it.” To judge accurately the relations in which Mr. Phillipps and the Evangelicals stood to each other requires more information than is afforded by his memoirs; but enough appears to show that differences then were in existence, preparatory to the breaking up of a compact party, that had rendered in earlier days invaluable service to the cause of religion. The eminent devoutness, the utter unworldliness, the diligence, the zeal, and the self sacrifice of this excellent man are testified on every page of his life.²

Another example of a different kind occurs in the ministry of a popular London minister, who attained the zenith of his fame fifty years ago.

Henry Melville, from 1829 to 1843, occupied the pulpit of Camden Chapel, which had previously been a dissenting place of worship. He read his sermons, which had been carefully prepared, with a view to

¹ *Records of the Ministry of the Rev. E. T. March Phillipps, M.A.*, p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 22. I am indebted for my knowledge of Mr. Phillipps’s life to Dr. Vaughan, Dean of Llandaff, who suggested him to me as a clergyman of a peculiar type.

the effect they would produce upon an audience in the act of listening. In his case evangelical doctrines, such as were held by Scott and Newton, came into close association with the highest sacerdotalism. In a published sermon he said, "If whensoever the minister is himself deficient and untaught, so that his sermon exhibits a wrong system of doctrine, and you will not allow that Christ's Church may be profited by the ordinance of preaching,—you clearly argue that Christ has given up His office, and that He can no longer be styled 'the minister of the true tabernacle'; when everything seems against the true followers of Christ, so that on a carnal calculation you would suppose the services of the Church stripped of all efficacy, then by acting faith in the Head of the ministry, they are instructed and nourished, though in the main the given lesson be falsehood, and the proffered sustenance little better than poison."

The third division of Churchmen at the period includes some already noticed, who persevered in characteristic modes of teaching. Dr. Whately, raised in 1831 to the Archiepiscopate of Dublin, published a volume of sermons in 1835, in which he refers to temples, altars, sacrifices, and priests, as belonging to the economy of the Old Testament, not to that of the New, and then very ingeniously brings the fact into the service of Christian evidence, saying, "It should seem indeed as if the very conception of a religion having no order of men officiating as priests to offer propitiatory sacrifices and act as mediators and intercessors for the people—no temple or altar for offering any such sacrifices at all, could

never have even entered their minds, much less have been for one moment entertained by them as what should or could be realized. If then, we find men so circumstanced actually introducing a religion without any such building as a temple,—without altars, and sacrifices, and without any priest on earth,—what is the inference to be drawn? Evidently that the religion is in truth of a Divine origin.” This original argument Whately confirms by showing that so novel a characteristic of our religion crossed the grain of human tendency, as it were, inasmuch as a return to priestly and sacrificial ideas in connexion with the ministers and institutes of the Gospel speedily occurred after the time of the Apostles ; and by this striking observation he really overthrew the foundation on which sacerdotal doctrines were obviously based. This was a valuable contribution at once to two controversies of the day, but not in the character of a partisan did he offer it ; for in a volume of Essays (1839) he showed what injury is done to the cause of truth by the formation of parties who delight in finding fault with one another. Aiming at singularity, however, he says, is not the only alternative left for those who deprecate a party spirit. Coincidence and wise combination, without partizanship, are valuable adjuncts to the advocacy of truth and righteousness. In this book we have admirable cautions against the abuse of private judgment, and also a number of considerations bearing on the conflicts of the hour. But, if I may anticipate a little, I would remark that in later publications, *The Kingdom of Christ*, and *Cautions for the Times*, he still more

directly and plainly enters on passing controversies. The first of these books touches the vital question of our Lord's kingdom, and the author contends that when Jesus said "My kingdom is not of this world," it was no mere disclaimer of present personal dominion, leaving it open to the Church in its complete development to become perfectly identified with the State.¹ The *Cautions* abound in reviews of Romanism, Tractarianism, and German metaphysics. He caustically remarks on the advancing "nebular taste for preferring glorious dimness to vulgar daylight," and speaks of contemporary popular English and American writers as "children of the mist, who wage war upon Christianity under cover of the twilight."² He showed no patience in dealing with mysticism, and was wont to treat it with unmerciful severity. Its haziness was hateful to one so accustomed to think and write with logical clearness and precision. He compared a liking of the former kind to the preference of a Londoner for November fogs over summer sunshine. In his *Cautions* he criticised, with equal displeasure, the servile deference of High Churchmen to patristic authority, and the misty ideas of other Churchmen who followed their own spiritual intuitions.

In some of Dr. Whately's observations on "Tradition" and kindred subjects, there is resemblance to remarks by Professor Powell in his *Tradition Unveiled*; also resemblance to another writer (Dr. Hawkins) is indicated by quoting, with approval, the following

¹ *Kingdom of Christ*, p. 36.

² *Cautions*, p. 501.

remark—"that in no other instance, perhaps, besides that of religion, do men commit the very illogical mistake of first canvassing all the objections against any particular system, whose pretensions to truth they would examine, before they consider the direct arguments in its favour."¹

There were other writers at the same time engaged in fields of religious thought similar to those chosen by Dr. Whately. Dr. Hampden, who somewhat resembled him. His *Bampton Lecture* in 1832 is a remarkable production, and is of great value to a student of historical theology. Much has been superfluously written on the question, how far the author was indebted to Blanco White in the preparation of this volume. That they were friends at the time is certain, that they talked over the subject is probable. But this does not affect the merit of the production, any more than a man's reading on the history of his subject diminishes his credit if he wisely employs his knowledge. The lectures on "The Scholastic Philosophy" had been preceded by nothing of the same kind, and he must have worked hard upon what he produced, whatever help he derived in the way of suggestion.

The work afterwards occasioned a violent controversy. It was thought to betray a latitudinarian indifference to orthodox truth, and as he was opposed to opinions at the basis of Tractarianism, many High Churchmen took revenge and made his *Bampton Lectures* a ground of attack. Certainly those lectures

¹ *Essays on some of the Dangers to Christian Faith*, p. 249.

manifested no *warm* interest in the fundamental truths of Christianity, but it was unfair to treat them as though they had been heretical. With great learning and rare keenness, he patiently traverses mediæval controversies on the Trinity, predestination and grace, justification, morals, and the Sacraments. Those who study the volume simply as a help to the knowledge of opinions, find it most valuable, without exposing their own orthodoxy to any peril by a discriminating perusal. When Hampden was made Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, a storm burst out. His opponents objected to the appointment on the ground of heresies in the *Bampton Lectures*. Steps taken in consequence are so differently represented, that I cannot enter into the controversy, except to say that it was full of personalities, and some who condemned the book had never read it. However, at a meeting of Convocation, a vote was carried excluding the professor from the list of select preachers. Personal feeling helped to produce this decision, but it is certain that attachment to Church orthodoxy—thought to be imperilled by the new professor's pretensions—operated as a powerful factor on the exciting occasion.

Another author somewhat resembling Whately was Dr. Shuttleworth, who wrote on *The Consistency of the whole Scheme of Revelation with Itself and with Human Reason* (1832),¹ a book which has scarcely received the attention it deserves. It answers to the title, and the order in which he discusses Christian

¹ Second vol. of Rivington's *Theological Library*.

doctrines is remarkable. Instead of beginning with the Trinity, he ends with it. The Divinity and Atonement of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the morality of the Gospel, are taken up in a thoughtful way, and when he reaches the mystery of the threefold distinction in the Godhead, he remarks : “ It stands in fact as the crowning point in which all the converging parts of God’s revealed arrangements would seem to terminate, and which, once removed, would cause the beautiful symmetry of that dispensation which Providence had been, for the space of four thousand years, fostering and maturing, until the period of its final promulgation, to fall of itself piece-meal into a mass of unconnected propositions and of intricate contrivances, deprived of any definite end or object. The slightest glance at the heads of the foregoing arguments will show that this assertion is not lightly or hastily made. It is, we repeat, evidently impossible to deny the truth of the trinitarian doctrine, and to retain those of the Atonement and of sanctifying grace as part and parcel of Christianity ; because the admission of the two latter, by an obvious implication, involves the certainty of the former.” Shuttleworth suggests the true order in which theologians should proceed ; not beginning where they should end, but passing up the temple, pausing by the way to meditate upon the doctrines of Sacrifice and Sanctification as in side chapels, whence we can best reach the steps which immediately lead to the choir and altar, where a Trinity in Unity is plainly revealed to the reverential worshipper.

CHAPTER V.

NEW MOVEMENTS.

1830-1837.

IN the last three chapters attention has been confined to the Established Church, where excitement existed in different forms ; looking outside that inclosure we find other phases of excitement equally apparent ; altogether they mark an unprecedented era in the religious history of England.

Revivals in America attracted notice in this country just before the year 1830. Numerous publications descriptive of facts were issued by transatlantic brethren, and private communications on the subject were received by several nonconformist ministers. Dr. Sprague, of Albany, and other influential divines, took leading parts in what was done for the reanimation of Churches in the United States, and reports issued under their authority quickened the zeal of English pastors. The Congregational Board in London entered into correspondence with the General Assembly of the American Presbyterian body, and received an elaborate reply, "While we would ever cherish," they said, "a humbling sense of our entire unworthiness, we are constrained to acknowledge with devout gratitude the rich blessings which the

Great Head of the Church has graciously bestowed upon our country in those revivals of religion which have occurred during the last thirty years." "While we recount, dear brethren, the gracious manifestations of Divine mercy towards our Churches, our hearts are gladdened by the tidings we hear from various sources that the camp of your Israel is moving triumphantly onward, and that brightening prospects open before you."

It appears from statements by President Humphrey, of Amherst College, that in 1827 and 1828 there had been a great awakening amongst the students. To use his language, "The word of God was quick and powerful. In many cases convictions of sin were extremely pungent. In some they may be said to have been overwhelming, but in most instances they were short." He speaks of thirty who were converted in a very short time.¹

Strong sympathetic feeling arose when such information was circulated in England. Mr. James, of Birmingham, took up the matter. So did Dr. Burder, of Hackney, and a special meeting for prayer was called by the Congregational Board in 1830. A sermon by Mr. Blackburn, of Pentonville, indicated the doctrinal principles, the peculiarities, the means, and the influence of these American revivals.

An effective quotation from the writings of John Howe showed that the spiritual impulse at the bottom of the excitement was no new thing, that it touched the hearts of Puritan divines, that they felt their

¹ Quoted in *Eadie's Cyclopædia*, art. "Revivals."

deficiencies and craved brighter light and holier power. "We know not," he said, "how to speak living sense into souls, how to get within you; our words die in our mouths, or drop and die between you and us." "There have been other ways taken than we can tell now, how to fall upon, for the mollifying of the obdurate, and the awakening of the secure, and the convincing and persuading of the obstinate, and the winning of the disaffected. Sure there will be a large share, that will come even to the part of ministers, when such an effusion of the Spirit shall be as is expected; that they shall know how to speak to better purpose, with more compassion, with more seriousness, with more authority and allurement, than we now find we can." Mr. Blackburn's sermon made many eager to catch the mantle, and to be filled with the spirit of the eminent Puritan's touching message.

Undulations on the surface, caused by revivalistic instrumentalities, were prolonged and repeated for a time, and visits of Americans deepened the effects. President Finney, of Oberlin College, an eminent revivalist, visited this country more than once, and by his preaching and addresses gave additional force to waves of spiritual emotion, rolling through several Congregational Churches. The publications of this American divine added to the impressions he produced from the pulpit. His *Lectures on Revivals* ran through thirteen editions in a short time; and another course on *Systematic Theology*, into which he wrought his revivalistic sentiments, was much commended by Dr. Redford, of Worcester.

Revivalism extensively obtained amongst nonconformist Churches. In what was called the Berkshire Association, extraordinary services occurred. On a winter's morning, before sunrise, people might be seen, lantern in hand, crowding the streets on the way to chapel, reminding one of what went on in Bunyan's time. In the quiet towns of Henley and Maidenhead scarcely less religious earnestness prevailed. In evening meetings buildings were thronged to listen to simple heart-stirring addresses. Large accessions to Church membership followed. Ministers were in full sympathy with one another, and acted harmoniously. No doubt there were instances of transient emotion, but a current of real life flowed through the proceedings. Churches were stirred up. More work was done. All came as the result of a spontaneous awakening. There were no mechanical contrivances, no elaborate preparations in the way of advertisement, or a construction of special edifices for the gatherings. Many remarked, "Nobody got it up." It came; it was welcomed; it left a blessing, exaggerated perhaps at the moment, but still such as could bear a satisfactory and grateful review long afterwards. After the lapse of a year or two, such meetings were renewed; but the difference between them and the preceding ones, in point of impression, was soon apparent.

Another form of religious excitement consisted in attending public meetings. It is difficult now to understand the change which arose in this respect. Public meetings had been few and far between at the beginning of the century; they increased at the end

of the first quarter, but a startling advance followed when the quarter turned. Anniversaries of societies attracted larger numbers, and it was difficult to find sufficient space for their accommodation. For many years the annual meetings of the Bible Society were confined to men. They assembled in Freemasons' Hall, which, though rather imposing from its portraits and other adornments, was inconvenient. It afforded no easy access to the platform, except through a narrow fenced-off passage on one side. As no hall existed adequate to the demand, places of worship were used, but they did not supply neutral ground needed for undenominational assemblies.

The period now before us may be appropriately designated by different names—certainly one of them would be “An Age of Great Societies.” “Union is strength” had come to be a loudly applauded motto, in some instances merging individuality in a stream of public opinion. To run counter to that was rather perilous to religious reputation. To express the feelings of a large majority was felt more and more to be a pressing want, and for doing so effectively a capacious edifice became indispensable. Hence, when the old Exeter 'Change was pulled down, a band of philanthropists determined to purchase the property, and to erect on it an edifice suited for the congresses of those who, by an infelicitous title, had come to be known as “the religious world.” Exeter Hall rose into a national institution, a type of energetic activity on the part of “Evangelical” religion. Thousands from the country in May returned to tell their friends of the vast sea of heads before the

speakers, some of whom were animated, or frightened by the spectacle. Some, who might have known better, indulged in ridicule. "O Anti-slavery Convention, loud sounding, long-eared Exeter Hall," exclaimed Thomas Carlyle, who had, however, the grace to add, "but in thee too is a kind of instinct towards justice." This characteristic apostrophe did not rouse the indignation of those at whom it was levelled as did the allusion of Macaulay to "the bray of Exeter Hall"; the indecorousness of his language being aggravated by a known early association through his father and others with the so-called Clapham sect.

It happened that one of the earliest meetings held, in what has been generally a temple of peace, presented a scene out of harmony with its purpose. The British and Foreign Bible Society held its anniversary there for the first time in 1831. An agitation had been going on for some months with the view of promoting what was deemed by some *a reform* of the society's constitution. They demanded that a pledge should be given "to discountenance all union with Socinians." With this was combined a wish that meetings should commence with formal prayer. Many who were not prepared to maintain the point of exclusiveness, felt strongly on the subject of prayer. In anticipation of the Exeter Hall gathering, the president, vice-president, and officers of the society issued an address, bearing on these two questions. They expressed their opinion that no practicable arrangement for prayer had been suggested; and that the devout temper of the society

was indicated in the tone of its reports. As to adopting measures for the exclusion of certain persons, the committee believed "that the sound principles of Christian faith, as well as Christian charity, are more likely to be promoted by an adherence to our present constitution, than by any change which would occasion a breach in the society."¹

Replies to anticipated objections were embodied in a report. The assembly was much larger than had ever been present at any anniversary. Ladies for the first time were admitted. It was a grand sight, and cannot be forgotten by the few persons living who witnessed it. The committee, before the end of their report, touched with a delicate hand the subject of union, urging a consideration which it becomes the members of the society still to bear in mind.

"We have considered," they said, "the proposition for introducing a law that the meetings of the society and its committee should be opened with prayer. It is obvious that the Bible Society by its constitution unites persons of different religious opinions in one important object, for the furtherance of which they may co-operate without any compromise of their respective principles. No arrangement has yet been suggested on the subject of the introduction of prayer into the meetings which appears to us generally practicable, or which would not demand such a compromise on the part of some of our members; and we cannot venture to recommend the adoption of a measure which might force any friends of the society to the alternative of either retiring from it or of appearing to sacrifice that consistency on which peace of mind and usefulness

¹ Browne's *History of the Bible Society*, vol. i. p. 125.

so materially depend. We are likewise persuaded that the tone which has pervaded its reports, and the sentiments which have animated its proceedings, must make it manifest that the society has distinctly professed to look up to the favour of the Most High, and to ascribe its success wholly to His blessing. This, we conceive, is the frame of mind in which the Christian is habitually prepared to enter upon any business, whether religious or secular." "We have also considered that the no less important question of adopting measures which would operate to the exclusion of any particular class of persons, on account of their religious opinions, by the introduction of a test on the admission of members ; and we believe that the sound principles of Christian faith, as well as Christian charity, are more likely to be promoted by an adherence to our present constitution, than by any change which would occasion a breach in the society."¹

When the resolution was put for the adoption of the report, amendments were proposed for the exclusion of Socinians—one for their total exclusion, the other for their exclusion from the society's agency. The subject of prayer was not included ; that was deferred until the principle of exclusion could be settled. An earnest discussion followed, and amidst the excitement were acts of a most disorderly character. Those who came to alter the society's constitution were but a minority ; yet they made themselves heard, and it was sad to witness the passionate expressions of feeling which were exhibited. Rowland Hill's venerable appearance and stentorian voice succeeded in gaining audience denied to others, and he provoked laughter by saying "he would accept a Bible from the devil himself, only he would take it

¹ Browne's *History*, vol. i. p. 124.

out of his hands with a pair of tongs." Amendments were lost, and when the patriarch of Surrey Chapel met his nephew, he said, "Sidney, I went to the Bible Society yesterday, but there was such a noise I came away." On his nephew remarking he expected there would be a commotion—"Commotion, indeed!" he replied; "you never heard anything like it. The proposal to turn out the Socinians appears to me to be altogether, in the present state of the society, unreasonable and unwise. If there was a danger of their gaining an ascendency, or if they gave away another version of the Scriptures, I should be for separating from them at once; but as long as they are in the minority, and are content to circulate our Bibles, it is quite preposterous to refuse to let them distribute the only antidote to their own errors. Why, for my part, I should be glad to get a Mohammadan to receive and dispense our Bibles; he might get good, and would do good."¹

Christian principle was manifested at the next anniversary, when two brothers—the Hon. Gerard and the Hon. Baptist Noel, who had faltered in their allegiance, the elder having written an accusatory pamphlet, the younger having seconded one of the amendments the year before—stood together on the platform and offered a retraction of their late opinion. The second meeting wiped out the unpleasant impression of the first; and here let me observe, that whatever might be the discordance of opinion in the large gathering described, nothing can

¹ *Life of Rowland Hill*, by Sydney, p. 456.

exceed the harmony which for the last fifty years has reigned in the meetings of the committee. Though it is composed of different denominations, no kind of strife has arisen out of that circumstance. Varieties of judgment on matters of detail of course there have been, but courtesy and brotherly love have ever maintained an ascendancy ; and I may be permitted to say, after a large experience in such matters, that I have never witnessed more of the true spirit of piety, if so much, anywhere else, as in the Bible House, Victoria Street, Blackfriars. The traditions of the old Earl's Street offices are in keeping with what has occurred in this more imposing edifice. The meetings of the society are now opened with prayer.

William Wilberforce made his last speech at the annual meeting in 1830, and though he lived till 1833, and therefore beyond the date of opening Exeter Hall, his voice, I believe, never echoed within its spacious walls. Joseph Hughes, the man who asked, when a Bible Society was proposed for Wales, "Why not a Bible Society for the kingdom ? why not for the world ?" died about the same time as Wilberforce. Exeter Hall soon became a popular institution, a great May resort for multitudes coming from all parts of the kingdom. A few years after it was opened, Haydon the artist painted a picture of a meeting of anti-slavery delegates there assembled. He was deeply affected by what he witnessed, and bore witness to the pathos and sublimity of the spectacle. The veteran Clarkson, decrepit from age, was led forward by Friend Joseph Sturge, and with a feeble voice appealed to the audience for a

few minutes' silent meditation and prayer before opening the proceedings. He spoke tremulously of Wilberforce, his honoured coadjutor ; and then, quivering with emotion, pointed to heaven, saying, " May the supreme Ruler of all human events, at whose disposal are, not only the hearts, but the intellects of men—may He, in His abundant mercy, guide your councils and give His blessing upon your labours." " There was a pause," relates the artist, " and then, without an interchange of thought or even of look, the whole of this vast meeting, men and women, said, in a tone of subdued and deep feeling, Amen ! " Such an incident as that, so striking in the eye of an artist, alone suffices to redeem Exeter Hall from the discredit cast on it by uncivil words expressed by people totally ignorant of its proceedings.

Within ten years of the opening of this temple of charity more than fifty distinct religious societies existed in England, to say nothing of Scotland, and in one year they raised above three-quarters of a million. Some of them, on ecclesiastical grounds, were indisposed, and others, on account of their limited number of constituents, were unable to use the ampler accommodation newly provided.

The excitement of the age had another expression of a practical kind. Authors and philanthropists had for years been investigating the moral and religious condition of London. *Babylon the Great, The Great Metropolis*, and other publications, had painted in dark colours the state of the city and suburbs. To turn over the pages of volumes and pamphlets written some fifty years ago is painful in the extreme ; and

one trembles at what then went on in the very heart of England. Colouring now, in some parts I think is over-charged, but when allowance is made for sensational effects, quite enough remains to show in what a state of neglect the metropolis had been left by our fathers. As we turn over old publications, we learn that in the west end were no less than forty gambling houses of the first order, where play went on Sunday after Sunday as at other times, and the annual amount lost and won was estimated at the enormous sum of seven millions. Streets and markets are described as being full of noisy bartering on the first day of the week as on the other six, whilst Mile End, Bethnal Green, and other places are pointed out as the resort of boys and men for shooting pigeons, hunting ducks, exulting in dog fights, and cheering pugilists to their savage encounters. Dens of vice are also indicated, some adorned with fascinating splendour, others mere sinks of filth and misery, the whole number containing from fifty to eighty thousand slaves of sensuality—I keep within bounds in stating these numbers. Night houses are unveiled, full of utter abandonment; drunkenness is seen leading onward to other vices; and these appear, dragging down men and women to crime and imprisonment, perhaps the gallows. Dishonesty was openly professed. “I had an opportunity,” says one authority, “of strictly examining more than 100 thieves between eight and fourteen; and in nineteen cases out of twenty the boy had been persuaded to commence the career of thieving.” Three million pounds are reckoned as spent on gin; twenty-three thousand people are

reported as found drunk in the streets ; thirty thousand as living on robbery and fraud ; and out of a million and a half of population, five hundred thousand are said to have entirely neglected public worship.

I remember as a student visiting Saffron Hill on a Sunday afternoon, to talk to outcasts who lived in back slums of that wretched neighbourhood. Standing on a door step, one gathered together a few ragged creatures, who crept out of their cavern-like abodes to listen to what seemed to them singularly strange. There were many interruptions, while here and there a face would be seen looking out of a window with some little interest ; and then, with a view to help the speaker, threats were vociferated at the troublesome audience, but so as only to increase not diminish the uproar. Also some fellow students would accompany me to an upper room in a back yard out of Drury Lane, where we held a service, and made use of the Church prayers ; but disturbances, which took place, were very distressing, and reminded us of Paul's words, "Ye come together not for the better, but for the worse." Open-air preaching was an old institution ; in wide areas multitudes had gathered to hear popular preachers ; but efforts of the kind now mentioned seemed to those whom we sought to benefit very unaccountable, because very novel. Churches and meeting-houses were abundant, and clergymen of all kinds decorously conducted Divine worship ; but the lowest class would not go near, and it was a long time before Christians thought of taking the gospel into the streets and lanes of the city, and knocking at the door to invite starving

souls to eat the bread of life. A great deal can be said now to match what was said then, but the neglect and inactivity of religious professors offered a striking contrast to the *endeavours* of the present day ; and this brings me to notice a new agency commenced in 1835.

Facts are on record in connexion with the Roman Catholic Church, showing how much may be done by individual effort. Everybody has heard of Vincent de Paul, founder of the Lazarites, a man who began a work of charity in Paris, which grew up to large dimensions ; less known is the story of Rosa Govona, a poor Piedmontese girl, who by her single efforts gathered together other poor girls, and became the foundress of the Retiro delle Rosine, a noted establishment in Turin. Now, there was a Scotch protestant named David Nasmith, who vied with these worthies, and in spiritual work excelled them. He, when a boy, with two school companions formed a Bible Society for the Glasgow poor. Afterwards he read the Scriptures to them, commenced adult schools, and visited prisoners in Bridewell. He then went to Dublin, and carried on there the same kind of effort. Not satisfied with Ireland as a field of labour, he resolved to visit America. He passed from city to city, and started little societies for home evangelization, wherever he went. He came back to Ireland, and then revisited the States, penetrating into Canada, and sowing everywhere seeds of truth and life. His benevolent wanderings were wonderful. He next went over to France, and established Young Men's Associations at Havre and Paris. But amidst these

excursive exertions he had only hastily glanced at London ; in the year 1835, however, he felt it his duty to settle down there, and see what could be done towards meeting its necessities. To secure freedom for carrying on his enterprises he had sacrificed £300 for a pittance of £40 a year. He took a tiny house at 13, Kenning Terrace, Hoxton, and began to look round on the mass of people who, as the Archbishop of Canterbury said "had outgrown the Church." What was to be done ? Just then Baptist Noel published one of those pamphlets on the state of the metropolis to which I have referred. Nasmith called on him, to propose that a union of Christians of different denominations should be organized for Christian work in the heart of London. "I very much fear," said the zealous minister, "that, in the present circumstances of the Church, you will find yourself repelled at every step, in any plan which contemplates the co-operation of different denominations." The consent of a bishop, he said, was necessary to move the clergy —the clergy were necessary to move the laity. The only course open was to choose between the Established Church and Dissent, for there is "a wide gulf just now," said the good man, "between Dissenters and the Establishment, perhaps neither party being free from blame, which would hinder individual members of the different bodies from acting together." This was the conclusion of Mr. Noel. Dr. Campbell, minister of Whitefield's places of worship, was next appealed to ; but he could see no way to united action. He condemned Nasmith's scheme as "an artificial institution," and as to agency and support entirely

wrong, adding, "with respect to its agents, supporters, and patrons, all is general and conventional, nothing congregational." Nasmith had a pleasant interview with the Bishop of London, but no encouragement came from that quarter. Indeed, all looked dark ; prophets said, "You can never succeed in London, at the present time, under existing circumstances, in forming a committee of Churchmen and Dissenters ; or if you do, they will not long hold together." At last Nasmith found three friends of kindred spirit, whom he invited to meet him early one morning at his home by the side of a dreary canal in Hoxton, which was separated from the cottage by a narrow footpath. Mr. Hamilton, the publisher, a saintly man, intended to join the two others, but lost himself in a network of miserable thoroughfares. "After prayer," Nasmith says, "we there formed the London City Mission, adopted our constitution, assigned offices to each other ; and after laying the infant Mission before the Lord, desiring that He would nurse and bless it, and make it a blessing to tens of thousands, we adjourned." For months the three friends met three times a week at six in the morning for prayer and business. They wisely determined not to join either those "who sought to build up, or to pull down the Churches of these lands," but those only who were anxious to add spiritual stones to the Divine building. God alone they asked to be their patron. They mapped out London : divided it into districts, and, eschewing desultory visitation, grouped five hundred families together, giving them in charge to agents, who were pleasantly styled by a minister at the

first public meeting, "domestic chaplains for the people."

That meeting of three Christian men at No. 13, Kenning Terrace, deserves to be had in everlasting remembrance. Out of it grew the institution, now of world-wide fame, which at its jubilee this year¹ could report an income of above £56,000, and a staff of missionaries amounting to 459. I have stood by the bubbling fountain of the Danube at Donaueschingen, and by the seven springs, not far from Cheltenham, where the Thames takes its rise, and have thought of the sweep of those great waters, and of the wealth borne on their bosom ; but I must confess to a nobler because a spiritual interest in thinking of the humble and obscure origin of the London City Mission, whose consequences flow into eternity, carrying with them the salvation and comfort of thousands and thousands of human souls.

Sympathy was soon awakened ; a board of management was formed on the principle of Christian union, and Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton was asked to be the first treasurer. The enterprise now was publicly started, and a crowded meeting, in Store Street, Russell Square, recognized the bold endeavour. Within a year forty-nine agents were stationed in different parts, and a balance of £1,600 was in the treasurer's hands. There were breakers ahead. Nasmith was a person of bold individuality and of an adventurous spirit. He affiliated six other institutions to his own, and said that he did not care whether

all the committee were Churchmen, or all were Dissenters, or in what proportions they were united together, provided they were "sound in the faith and zealous in gospel effort." But his colleagues felt it necessary to adopt the principle that half the committee should be Churchmen and half Dissenters, and that the work done should be simply visitation and conversational instruction. The good originator of the enterprise, restless under restraint, resolved to separate himself from such an organization ; but he did so without the slightest acrimony. He resumed independent operations, and instituted missions at Birmingham, Manchester, Paisley, and twenty other towns. After incessant labour, health failed at the end of four years ; and one Sunday morning, as the church bells at Guildford were ringing for service, he asked, " Do the tribes of the Lord go up to-day ? " " I am ready to go, whenever my Master may call me." Before the bells rang again, David Nasmith was beyond the reach of their music.¹

The prosperity of the City Mission has demonstrated its right of existence. From a staff of two or three agents we see it has risen to 459 men. They include labourers amongst distinct classes of people : cabmen, the police, and sailors—European, foreigners, and orientals. " The result has been most beneficial." The plan " concentrates on one point all the moral and intellectual energies of one man ; it enlarges and

¹ An interesting description of Nasmith's work and the origin of the City Mission has been published under the title of " Round the Tower."

elevates his sense of responsibility, and enables him to see and enjoy the fruits of his labour.”¹ With the name of David Nasmith should be associated the names of John Garwood and John Robinson, its effective secretaries for many years; and, not to mention others, John Branch, singularly gifted, was one of its earliest, most effective and popular agents. Such men are forgotten amidst a crowd of dignitaries and denominational divines, but they deserve a high place in the records of English Christendom.

¹ “These Fifty Years.” Jubilee Volume. Introduction by Lord Shaftesbury, p. viii.

CHAPTER VI.

DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTARYISM.

1830-1837.

VOLUNTARYISM largely shared in the excitement of the age. The wave of a wide-spreading revival swept over dissenting Churches, as well as over the national establishment. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," and there is mystery in the direction of its currents; but at the period now under review, one cause at least is not far to seek: it may be found in that spirit of reform and progress which touched society at all points. Its vigorous action made itself felt, not only in political, but in ecclesiastical circles.

Congregationalists took important steps in advance of previous proceedings within their own denominational limits; and they were joined by other bodies in certain proceedings of a wider kind.

The institution of a Congregational Library was an incident, not in itself of general importance, but it was connected with something else, which gives it considerable interest. The prospectus starting this new scheme referred to the old Red Cross Street Library, so closely interwoven with nonconforming history, and it was suggested that "a denominational

house" for orthodox Independents was requisite to place the body on a level with the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Countess' Connexion—all of which had premises of their own for the transaction of business. A building in Blomfield Street was to be sold, and that was deemed highly eligible for the desired undertaking. A library of books appeared a proper adjunct.

The prime mover was John Blackburn, minister at Pentonville, who preached a sermon noticed in the last chapter—a man whose bland countenance, reddish hair, and pathetic voice were familiar to the dissenting public fifty years ago, and whose popularity, combined with literary taste and business capacity, gave him influence amongst his brethren. The person who did most to fill the library shelves was Joshua Wilson, well read in nonconformist Bibliography, possessor himself of an immense collection of books, indeed of more than he knew what to do with; and this gentleman had a sympathising coadjutor in Benjamin Hanbury, an erudite puritan editor of "Memorials" in three volumes, and intimately acquainted with hundreds and thousands of ugly looking tracts of different editions,—to him precious as the gold of Ophir. He was no orator, but he helped in council, and was zealous in the collection and arrangement of stores needful for the new institute. The library was used as a hall for denominational meetings, with forms on each side and rows in the middle of them, when empty not picturesque, when filled not convenient. On the same floor and higher up were offices occupied by secretaries and clerks.

Blomfield Street became the birthplace and cradle of the Congregational Union.

A general union of ministers and Churches throughout the kingdom had been thought of in 1806, when, at a meeting of the Congregational Board for London and the neighbourhood, a resolution was adopted commanding such an undertaking ; and a committee drew up a plan for its execution. However, nothing practical arose out of these circumstances. Only it appears that in 1817 the existing board declared it was formed to take cognizance of everything affecting the interests of the denomination in particular and of religion in general ; accordingly, when, in 1819, a bill came before Parliament for building new churches and chapels at the expense of the State, a deputation was appointed to wait upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and also upon Wilberforce, Brougham, and others. The bill was withdrawn.

In 1831 the time came for the consolidation of what had long existed in a nebulous state. Congregationalists, influenced by the progressive impulse of the times, wished to revive the life of the whole body, to dispel torpor, to rouse energetic action, and to combine distinct congregations in an organized unity, which should not imperil corporate independence. A wide-spread agitation on the point led to private and public discussions, attended by controversies and questions as to who should first appear in the field. Delegates from sympathetic Churches assembled in May, 1831, to the number of a hundred, within the recently opened library.

Archibald Douglas, of Reading, presided, a vener-

able man, who well represented the Congregational fathers of his day. Plain, expository teaching was in demand ; people did not crave intellectual excitement, and Mr. Douglas, who certainly had no genius, but much shrewdness and sagacity, kept together for many years a large and influential congregation. It was his practice on Sunday afternoons to descend from the pulpit in his gown and bands, to catechise the children with dignity and gentleness. An adjourned meeting followed, under the presidency of a more distinguished man.

There are some whose memory is recalled by an imitation of their voice ; not that they are “*vox et præterea nihil*,” but in the mode of utterance there is an indication of character. This was the case with Dr. Fletcher, chairman of the adjourned meeting. He had much to express, great argumentative ability, a wide power of illustration, and decided convictions, as a Christian, a Protestant, and an evangelical Dissenter. His musical voice harmonized with his warmth of sentiment ; and a careful study of vocal inflection appeared in consonance with a smooth rhetorical diction. At this second meeting it was resolved—

“ 1. To promote evangelical religion in connexion with the Congregational denomination.

“ 2. To cultivate brotherly affection and sincere co-operation in everything relating to the interests of the associated Churches.

“ 3. To establish fraternal correspondence with Congregational Churches, and other bodies of Christians, throughout the world.

“4. To address an annual letter to the associated Churches, accompanied with such information as may be deemed necessary.

“5. To obtain accurate statistical information relative to the Congregational Churches throughout the kingdom and the world at large.

“6. To inquire into the present methods of collecting funds for the erection of places of worship, and to consider the practicability of introducing any improved plan.

“7. To assist in maintaining and enlarging the civil rights of Protestant Dissenters.”

The second annual gathering in 1832, under Mr. Chaplin, of Bishop’s Stortford, witnessed the laying of the corner-stone of the union.

Mr. James, of Birmingham, presented a paper containing a declaration of the faith and order of evangelical Congregationalists, and this important step calls for historical remark.

It is a mistake to suppose that the fathers of the denomination were adverse to doctrinal formularies. The early Churches were exceedingly particular in the statement of their views, and many of those Churches had creeds of their own, on the principle that each community was responsible for its beliefs. The practice of united confession also obtained. The Westminster Confession, which moulded the theology of puritan Christendom, was produced, in concert with Presbyterians, by a few Independents, perhaps altogether ten or eleven in number. When, at Oliver Cromwell’s death, a meeting of Independents took place at the Savoy Palace—a meeting not to be confounded with the Savoy conference afterwards—

they substantially adopted the Westminster theology, appending to it a manifesto of their own Church principles. The propriety of publishing such documents was recognized by the Heads of Agreement, between Independents and Presbyterians, in 1690. Hence, whether approved or not by the denomination of the present day, the founders of the Union acted in conformity with precedents in their own annals. The divine who framed the declaration was Dr. Redford, of Worcester, a dignified person of ability and erudition, who at times over-awed people by his presence ; but age by degrees beautifully mellowed his strong natural character. His intellectual power ran in a logical direction, and in debate he proved himself a keen disputant.

It may be well to quote some preparatory notes, explaining the position this document was designed to occupy, as they indicate the sensitiveness of the delegates lest they should be thought invaders of the rights of individual conscience.

“ 1. It is not designed, in the following summary, to do more than to state the leading doctrines of faith and order maintained by Congregational Churches in general.

“ 2. It is not proposed to offer any proofs, reasons, or arguments in support of the doctrines herein stated, but simply to declare what the denomination believes to be taught by the pen of inspiration.

“ 3. It is not intended to present a scholastic or critical confession of faith, but merely such a statement as any intelligent member of the body might offer, as containing its leading principles.

“ 4. It is not intended that the following statement should

be put forth with any authority, or as a standard to which assent should be required.

“ 5. Disallowing the utility of creeds and articles of religion as a bond of union, and protesting against subscription to any human formularies as a term of communion, Congregationalists are yet willing to declare, for general information, what is commonly believed among them, reserving to every one the most perfect liberty of conscience.

“ 6. Upon some minor points of doctrine and practice, they, differing among themselves, allow to each other the right to form an unbiassed judgment of the word of God.

“ 7. They wish it to be observed, that, notwithstanding their jealousy of subscription to creeds and articles, and their disapproval of the imposition of any human standard, whether of faith or discipline, they are far more agreed in their doctrines and practices than any Church which enjoins subscription, and enforces a human standard of orthodoxy; and they believe that there is no minister and no Church among them that would deny the substance of any one of the following doctrines of religion, though each might prefer to state his sentiments in his own way.”

It is proper that I should emphasize the fact that the declaration did not pretend to be as precise as the Westminster Confession. It did not aim at minute definition, but at a general description. It was popular rather than scholastic. It allowed differences of opinion *within limits*; but the fourteenth and fifteenth articles were certainly in closer alliance with the Church of Geneva than with any other:—

“ XIV. They believe that all who will be saved were the objects of God’s eternal and electing love, and were given by an act of Divine sovereignty to the Son of God; which in no way interferes with the system of means, nor with the

grounds of human responsibility, being wholly unrevealed as to its objects, and not a rule of human duty.

"XV. They believe that the Scriptures teach the final perseverance of all true believers to a state of eternal blessedness, which they are appointed to obtain through constant faith in Christ, and uniform obedience to His commands."

No member of the denomination who has reached an advanced age can deny that these articles set forth the current belief of fifty years ago. It was moderately Calvinistic, influenced by such divines as Dr. Williams, Andrew Fuller, and Dr. Wardlaw. Ministers and people generally believed in "election and perseverance," in "Divine sovereignty and effectual calling"; whilst they strenuously maintained the accountableness of man, the universality of gospel invitations, the sufficiency of the atonement for the whole race, and the perfect equity of the Divine government. The language employed in the above propositions was in harmony with old Calvinistic formularies, in the heart of which, when scholastic expressions are stripped off, there lies this principle—that the unchangeable will of God and not the fluctuating wills of men, the purpose of the Creator and not the purposes of the creature, are the foundation of an order gracious and righteous, by which the universe is governed and the Lord of all is glorified.

The meeting did not adopt the draft at once, but invited opinions as to "whether in accordance with the example of our nonconformist ancestors, it be desirable to *present to the public* a declaration of the

leading articles of our faith and discipline; and whether, if it be deemed desirable, that declaration should be made by such a statement as that which has just been read (the reference was to the preliminary notes) but not discussed, in the meeting of the Union, subject to such modifications as may be suggested and generally agreed on at the next general meeting."

Caution further appears in a resolution that the committee should prepare a letter, carefully stating that the object of the document was to communicate information to the public on the doctrines held by Independents.

The declaration created little discussion. It was accepted as a statement, not of doctrines imposed on the body, but of doctrines which as a fact were generally held. Some did not agree in all the articles, but they were comparatively few. I *know* that certain men approached the Arminian standpoint, and also that others went beyond the rest in the opposite direction. Whilst cordial unanimity was on the whole professed, and really felt, allusion was made to the spread of free thought, and consequent controversies outside the Congregational realm. "We therefore," it is added, "cannot fail on this solemn and delightful occasion to bless the God of peace and love that amidst the general excitement of the public mind, our individual associated Churches, necessarily so susceptible of popular excitement and control, have been preserved steadfast in the faith, keeping the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace."

This passage is singularly significant. Whoever

wrote it little dreamt of the wave of thought which was nearing his own quarters. He did not see how the gale, making wide circles, would some day catch every denominational bark, if not within the centre whirlpool, yet more or less within its outside dimpling eddies.

The members in 1833 passed a significant resolution, to the effect that the institution of the gospel ordained by Christ, being sufficient for their own purposes, without the aid of the civil power, the application of this power for the enforcement of those institutions must be considered as a reflection on the wisdom of Christ and an offence against His authority. That principle had really been implied in the proceedings of voluntary Congregationalists from the beginning, though not always clearly seen and fully grasped ; and all the appeals made to the New Testament, as furnishing the broad basis on which Church polity was to rest and Church work was to be carried on, turned attention to the Christendom of the first century—the Christendom of Christ and His apostles—as the divinely constituted order of things by which the purposes of the gospel were to be carried on for ever. “ My kingdom is not of this world,” was the fundamental law of the new economy. No words were more familiar to the Independent Churches of that day, and therefore it would have been a strange omission to omit all protest against the principle of ecclesiastical establishments. The same resolution which recognised the doctrine of voluntaryism complained of grievances then in existence, such as church rates and the burial

and marriage laws. At the same time the Union desired the promotion of brotherly affection amongst evangelical Dissenters ; hence they resolved to make overtures to the United Presbyterians of Scotland, and recommended the sending of representatives to Presbyterian and Congregational assemblies in Philadelphia and New England.

The delegates chosen for America were Dr. Reed and Dr. Matheson. Dr. Reed, great as a philanthropist, great as the founder of asylums, which have made his name famous throughout Europe and America, will be chiefly known by posterity in his beneficent relations to the orphan and the idiot in his beloved country. But though never much of a denominational man,—rather working along lines of individual and self-chosen effort, never a prominent and familiar figure on the Union platform, rather busying himself with pastoral work, and preaching on particular occasions,—he yet was a very pronounced Dissenter ; and his most conspicuous appearance in our history is as one of a deputation to convey salutations from England, and as an author who after his return published an account of his travels, containing a description of the falls of Niagara—decidedly amongst the best ever published. Dr. Matheson was for several years pastor of a Church in the city of Durham, where he stood as a pillar of northern Congregationalism, and fought newspaper battles in defence of his principles.

A Colonial Missionary Society was formed in connexion with the Union, partly as a result of the mission across the Atlantic, which included visits in

Canada. Of this new institute, as well as of the union itself, Algernon Wells became the secretary.

“He attended one of the early meetings of the union, not so much as an objector as a doubter—proposing difficulties and seeking their solution—the ultimate result of which was, that he became its devoted secretary himself! In his combined offices of secretary to the Union and to the Colonial Missionary Society—in the latter of which I personally acted with him during the whole time he fulfilled its duties—it is hardly possible to award him excessive praise. His wise suggestions, his efficient plans, his judgment in counsel, his prudence in action, his full official preparations for business, whether of private committees or public meetings, his talent for correspondence, his tact in difficulties, his beautiful addresses, printed or spoken, his bearing and deportment, spirit and tone—everything belonging to him, within him, and about him, marked him out as one whom God had peculiarly qualified for that kind of work which he did so well, and of which therefore he was called upon to do so much.”¹

I may add he had, like Thomas Aquinas, “the gift of tears,” and was apt to weep on public occasions when his heart was touched, or his carefully finished plans were interrupted; but he had a fund of humour in conversation, and could pour forth sunny smiles and hearty, healthy laughs, such as I do not think often irradiated and warmed the countenance of the angelic doctor.

Early meetings of the Union were small, that which was held in 1833 not amounting to more than 150,

¹ Funeral sermon for Mr. Wells by Thomas Binney.

inclusive of students. All was calm, quiet, homely ; no elaborate oration from the chair, no series of disquisitional papers, no eloquent speaking, no crowd of spectators. The gatherings increased as time rolled on, until it was necessary to secure larger accommodation than Blomfield Street supplied, when the brethren migrated to Crosby Hall, where antique architecture, a well carved roof, and a stately dais gave dignity to the surroundings.

A desire to preserve the old literature of Nonconformity had led to the establishment of the Congregational Library ; a desire to produce a new literature for nonconformist purposes created another institution at a rather earlier date. This was the "Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society." It was thought desirable to present in a popular way information relative to the history and principles of Dissent, much ignorance on the subject being supposed to exist. Different opinions obtained, not after all perhaps so much in reference to principles, as to the mode in which they should be expressed. A majority of the London ministers preferred seeking to remove practical grievances ; others wished to go further. They insisted on the voluntary principle as antagonistic to all ecclesiastical establishments, and sought to bring the question within the range of practical politics. The enlightenment of public opinion on the subject was their first desire and immediate endeavour. The persons most prominent in this new enterprise were Dr. Bennett and Mr. Blackburn, both considered at that time as representing an advanced type of voluntary opinions ; also Dr. Cox, who had

taken a leading part in proceedings connected with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. Dr. Murch, of the Baptist College, Stepney, Dr. Pye Smith, Dr. Andrew Reed, Mr. Burnet, of Camberwell, with several others, assisted in the enterprise. A meeting was held in May, 1829, to start the project—an incident coeval with early steps towards raising the Congregational Library. Some of the society's publications were strongly objected to, and in the report for 1834 this circumstance is acknowledged. "That the society should be looked upon with suspicion by intolerant Churchmen and by *undecided* Dissenters is what was foreseen ; that it has attracted marked attention and is the subject of vituperation are matters of exultation rather than of regret." Such a tone of remark was not likely to retain amongst the supporters persons who claimed the right of judging for themselves. Certainly Dr. Pye Smith was no "undecided" Dissenter ; but he retired from the committee, objecting to its proceedings, after having urged greater vigilance in "guarding against violations of equity."

Whilst this new society contemplated the guidance of thought, some of its founders were further intent upon giving impulse to action. State reform had roused the energies of people in general ; reform of ecclesiastical establishments had moved Churchmen in particular ; now reform as to the relation in which the secular stood to the spiritual power influenced more than ever multitudes who professed non-conformist opinions. Scotland, by the year 1834, was in a perfect uproar on the question of voluntaryism. A magazine was started called the *Voluntary*

Church Magazine; meetings were held, and sermons were preached, filled with voluntary fervour. As in older times clansmen had carried the blazing brand from hill to hill, calling Highlanders to battle, so now across the Tweed the ecclesiastical war signal was carried near and far, and speedily fires of excitement were lighted up in the northern and midland towns of England. Voluntary Church associations were formed in Liverpool, in Ashton, and in Birmingham. Presently there appeared a bolder crusade than ever against laws enforcing Church rates. Parishes in Manchester, Leeds, and other places refused to vote a rate; and in 1834 a Church Rate Abolition Bill was brought into the House of Commons. It was withdrawn on a promise being given by Lord John Russell that the Government would take up the matter. Government did take it up, and proposed to shift the expense of keeping Church buildings in repair from a parochial rate on to the shoulders of the land tax. Such a compromise was rejected; the scheme fell through, and the grievance remained, deepening dislike to the Establishment.

The subject was not allowed to rest, and the same year, 1834, a general convention was called; this call met with responses from several hundred delegates. They came to London, and the speeches delivered made a strong impression. Mr. Edward Baines, member for Leeds, father of the present Sir Edward, was in the chair, surrounded by a goodly array of speakers, John Angell James, Dr. Winter Hamilton, and William Howitt amongst others. It was resolved that only by a separation of Church and State could

equal rights be secured to all classes ; that the non-conformist expectation had been disappointed by the ministerial measure ; and that the Establishment had enough at its disposal to meet its own expenses without any demand upon Dissenters. Disestablishment did not seem to mean, in the estimation of that meeting, disendowment. It was implied that Church property would be retained by those in possession, even after a severance took place. The fable of the sibyl and her books only just began to be realised. Demands rose as time rolled on. The registration measure for births, deaths, and marriages was believed to be the fruit of this early agitation. No rest was allowed, and in 1836 arose a Church Rate Abolition Society. It was not confined to Nonconformists. Charles Lushington, M.P., presided at its formation. Joseph Hume, of financial fame, Daniel Whittle Harvey, T. S. Duncombe, Benjamin Hawes, and William Ewart, advanced Liberals of that day, and nominal adherents of the Church of England, were enrolled amongst the members. The main stress of the business however fell on Dissenters, and the associations formed by them were diligent in preparing petitions and forwarding them to Parliament. They so far succeeded as to induce the Lower House to pass a resolution for paying Church rates out of ecclesiastical property and pew rents ; but the majority being small, the ministry would not act upon the resolution. Abolition of rates stood over to be settled at a later date, discontent, the meanwhile, smouldering on where it did not burst into a flame.

The discipline of circumstances is manifest in this

page of nonconformist history. Great principles have on rare occasions flashed on the higher Order of minds with a kind of inspiration ; mostly ideas below the surface have slowly risen into distinct manifestation. Now and then a doctrine has been struck out, as if by fire ; but commonly the process may be compared to the hewing of marble or the carving of oak, by patient chippings of the artist's chisel. Many of the early Nonconformists were averse to the dissent which was forced upon them ; they preferred comprehension, but were compelled to secede. Uniformity and Conventicle Acts led to distinct places of worship. The inflexibility of rulers opened people's eyes to the impossibility of a return to their old home. A refusal of orders to men who scrupled to subscribe created another kind of ordination. Shut out from the universities, Dissenters established academies of their own. The rubicon crossed, other steps were naturally taken. The free Churches of the last century were outgrowths of congregations driven into holes and corners a hundred years before ; Puritanism in their case became voluntaryism. The practice had obtained ere the principle was grasped. Books were written basing dissent on objections to Church formularies, but these were followed by arguments against the groundwork of establishments altogether. A controversy which was at first purely religious, in the course of time became political, because politics were seen to be inextricably interwoven with the state of things called in question. A review of ecclesiastical history, including annals of persecution in England, strengthened the convictions of voluntary

Nonconformists ; for they saw that, but for a political establishment after the Reformation, there could have been no Act of Uniformity and no Five Mile Act. It was quite as clear that, but for a similar cause under the Commonwealth, there could not have been the persecution which Episcopalians, as honest Dissenters must admit, had then to endure. Besides, as I have intimated already, the New Testament argument against establishments had been more clearly apprehended than ever by the persons I am describing, and it had much more force with them than anything else.

Two other circumstances arose. Voluntaryism had entered the Establishment itself, and was working wonders there ; churches were built, clergymen were supported, and societies were formed by free-will offerings. This strengthened the nonconformist position. And at the same time, as we have just seen, sympathy with Dissenters, as to practical grievances, was expressed by Liberals outside the dissenting circle, who aided in procuring legislative redress. How the controversy proceeded is plain enough. Social justice, "religious equality," sprang forth as corollaries from foregone conclusions. Reformers, economists, politicians of different kinds gathered round the Christian chieftains, who led them on, and made common cause in pursuing certain objects. No doubt there was danger in this, a temptation to descend from higher to lower ground.

The original contention had been that the Church of Christ is a spiritual institute, that He is the Lawgiver of His people, that His crown rights must

be loyally maintained, and that the ennoblement of human souls and the glory of the Divine name are the main objects contemplated by evangelical Non-conformity. There lay its moral strength; those who were its best friends felt this, and were reasonably jealous lest minor aspects of the question should gain ascendency, and that it should sink into a mere political conflict.

CHAPTER VII.

THE THREE DENOMINATIONS.

1830-1837.

PRESBYTERIAN ministers in and about London constituted the first of "The Three Denominations"; but an important change occurred in the position of Presbyterians relative to the other bodies, and this circumstance requires explanation.

For some time a want of cordiality had arisen between Independents and Baptists on the one hand, and Presbyterians on the other. When the denominations first united for the purpose of guarding their liberties, a belief in what are called orthodox opinions bound them in religious as well as political sympathies; but as dissension appeared in the eighteenth century, and Socinianism increased in the nineteenth, the remaining attachment was confined to a common interest in the cause of liberty. After increased fervour in the maintenance of evangelical religion began to obtain in the orthodox bodies, a feeling of estrangement from the Presbyterian party increased, although mutual courtesy might be still expressed. In 1829 one of the Independents at a Congregational Board meeting proposed that the board should withdraw from a union which included avowed anti-

trinitarians. After a long discussion this proposal was negatived, but the subject was not allowed to rest. Of course Presbyterians were annoyed at the procedure, and at the alienation now unmistakably manifest; but the orthodox claimed credit for sincerity and earnestness in their theological convictions. More offensive conduct was shown by zealots outside the board than by those within ; indeed, some of the latter continued on terms of kindly intercourse with those from whom they differed in doctrine. Minor circumstances, needless to relate, exasperated some of the Presbyterian leaders, who adhered to the idea that the union rested simply on the principle of equal religious liberty. As the orthodox were a large majority, the minority who conscientiously differed determined, in the year 1836, to separate, and claimed an independent exercise of privileges long shared with others. After referring to acts which they considered violations of the original bond, they declared, “ We feel it to be an imperative though painful duty, imposed upon us equally by regard to our own character as Protestant dissenting ministers—who hold it to be one of the inalienable rights of conscience that no one shall, without his own consent, be answerable to another for his honest judgment upon the sense of the holy Scriptures,—by respect for the memory of those who went before us, and laid the foundation of our freedom, and by regard to the welfare of those that shall come after us, to withdraw as a body from a union, the compact of which has been violated, and in which we see no prospect of equal and peaceful co-operation, or of

real and effective service to the interests of religious liberty." ¹

This temperate resolution concluded with a disavowal of hostile feelings, and an expression of wishes for the usefulness of the other denominations "in the cause of freedom, truth, and virtue." Afterwards a communication was sent to those who remained, intimating that the trustees of Dr. Williams' Library declined its further use for meetings of the "three denominations," on the ground that the united body no longer existed ; but they politely placed the library at the service of the Congregationalists and Baptists either in a separate or joint capacity. Knowing what human nature is, we cannot suppose that only amiable feelings on either side were allowed at this painful juncture ; certainly however official intercourse on both sides was eminently dignified and courteous. The kind offer of Dr. Williams' trustees was declined with an expression of thanks.

Different judgments as to this matter depended on different views of the nature of the union. Unitarians treated it as a bond for maintaining freedom ; Trinitarians regarded it as something more, and believed, whether rightly or wrongly, that to continue the connexion, after a great change in Presbyterian theological views had occurred, was to countenance error. Certainly there were violent things said on both sides, and in some of the stages of the dispute it appears that the orthodox were not as courteous as they ought to have been. It was an unhappy

¹ *Memoir of the Rev. R. Aspland*, p. 532.

affair, and now that it is all over, one sees how it might have been differently managed. If the controversy had to be determined now, it would perhaps lead to a different issue.

Unitarians, immediately after the severance, waited on Lord Melbourne and Lord John Russell to explain what had taken place, and to persuade Government not to recognize any Presbyterian body but themselves, and to grant to the separate bodies like privileges of access to the throne. The Unitarians were displeased at the substitution of Scottish Presbyterians in London for those who had seceded, and contended that they themselves were the only real English Presbyterians. The ultimate arrangement was that Scottish Presbyterians should constitute the third main branch of the union, retaining the ancient privileges ; and that Unitarians should be recognized as a distinct denomination, bearing the Presbyterian name, and enjoying the same favour as had been of old conceded to their historical predecessors.

Another point of difference arose about the same time. The *Regium Donum*, an old grant long before included in the civil list, continued to be voted in parliamentary estimates, and to be paid into the hands of certain distributers, each representing one of the denominations. The Presbyterians approved of this grant, and a new distributer of their share was appointed in the person of Dr. Thomas Rees ; but Independents and Baptists generally had an objection to receive Government aid for religious objects, and a vigorous effort to that effect was made by the Congregational Board in 1834. This opposition, though

general, was not perfectly unanimous. Dr. Pye Smith, an advanced Dissenter, a thorough voluntary, and even a member of societies pledged to the principle of disestablishment, strenuously upheld the grant ; he was consequently reproached for inconsistency, though he had a mind acute enough to reconcile his conduct in this respect with his theoretical principles. Of his conscientiousness none but bigoted partisans could have the slightest doubt. He was a distributer for the Independents ; and it is curious that Dr. Cox, another very pronounced Dissenter, distributed the share appropriated to the Baptists. This showed an independence of judgment which, if not approved, deserved respect from those most opposed to the principle of the grant. It continued to be placed on the votes until 1851, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced, that, in accordance with the feelings of Dissenters, the *Regium Donum* should terminate. Dr. Cox withdrew beforehand from the office of distributer, but Dr. Smith continued to defend and exercise it, which, as might be expected, led to a warm controversy. It was best for all parties that this charge on the funds of the country should no longer continue.

During the reign of William IV. the two most prominent English Presbyterians were Mr. Aspland and Mr. Madge. Mr. Aspland's eloquence has been already noticed, as well as his exertions in the cause of Unitarianism, with which he always identified the cause of religious freedom. With filial affection his son pourtrays his religious convictions, his social virtues, and his remarkable decision of character :

and does not conceal the warmth of his temper and his personal dislike to certain eminent Trinitarians. With other persons however it is manifest Mr. Aspland cultivated feelings of esteem and affection to his dying day ; and chief amongst them was his neighbour, Dr. Pye Smith, one of the most able and zealous advocates of our Lord's divinity.¹

Mr. Madge, of Essex Street, who did not sustain any intimate relationship to Mr. Aspland, so far as appears from the memoir by his son, shared, I suppose, the palm of eloquence with his brother at Hackney. After sustaining a high reputation in the city of Norwich, he became pastor of the congregation founded by the celebrated Theophilus Lindsay. In Essex Street he numbered amongst his hearers several persons of wealth and aristocratic distinction, and was regarded as a pillar of his denomination. I remember him in my early days, and in later life he, in conversation with me, candidly expressed his views. He strongly maintained the facts of the New Testament, and considered a belief in our Lord's resurrection essential to the acceptance of New Testament Christianity. He had a son whom he greatly loved, and whose spiritually minded ministry he described with deep emotion ; he also cultivated intercourse with other denominations, and, I am informed, occasionally worshipped at Union Chapel, Islington, in the neighbourhood of which he died.

The Congregational Board for a while met at Austin Friars, just in front of the venerable Dutch or

¹ *Memoir of Robert Aspland.* By his son.

German Church of that name—a name which carries one back to the time of Edward VI., when it was appointed that “the Germans should have the Austin Friars for their church,” to hold service in, avoiding “all anabaptists and such like.” In 1831 the board removed to the Congregational Library, where it continued to assemble monthly until the building was pulled down in 1866. There it was that discussions were carried on respecting the Presbyterian secession and the *Regium Donum*; and the spirit of the brethren seems to have fired up in 1836, when the seceders alleged that the body of the three denominations was defunct. “To this an elaborate protest was adopted, and entered on the minutes. A deputation was also appointed to wait on Lord John Russell, one of the secretaries of State, to communicate the fact that, although the Unitarians had retired, the body of the three denominations still existed.”

A resolution was passed in February, 1837, “to consider Congregational ministers of approved character, whose Churches may choose to employ pre-composed forms in their worship, eligible for membership. This resolution conduced to the admission of several brethren held in high estimation.”¹

The resolution had a marked significance. It showed a change of opinion with regard to liturgies, which, though not now sanctioned for the use of

¹ This and other items of information are taken from a *History of the Congregational Board* by the Rev. T. James, chairman, printed for private circulation, and inserted in the Congregational Year-Book for 1867.

Congregational Churches, were no longer considered as barriers to Congregational fellowship. In early days no prayer-book of any kind was tolerated by Independents, and an especial dislike to that of the Church of England largely prevailed ; but near the middle of the present century old-fashioned strictness in this respect underwent relaxation. Congregations in which a modified Church liturgy was used had been either included within the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, or had stood in isolation outside the circle of London Independency. Now the doors were opened for their admission ; this however did not increase liturgical worship, or augment the number of such congregations as assembled in Surrey Chapel and Tottenham Court, though, in the early part of the century, liturgical worship as maintained then under the influence of the Methodist revival, proved exceedingly popular. A feeling grew that societies of this kind were of a transitional character. Denominationalism attained ascendancy. Old ideas of union, of the amalgamation of Churchmen and Dissenters, thus lost their previous position. It was not merely that such schemes were found almost, if not quite, impracticable, but nonconformist taste in the direction of union gave place to associations, alliances, and the like, between one congregation and another of the same order. Definite Church organization and corresponding discipline came increasingly to be regarded as desirable. A striking example of this tendency occurred at the Finsbury and Tottenham Court tabernacles, accompanied, I regret to say, with some painful circumstances.

George Whitefield, their founder, was great in the pulpit, but lacked the administrative genius so largely possessed by John Wesley. Though for many years after Whitefield's decease veneration for his memory and the enjoyment of popular Calvinistic preaching kept immense multitudes together, gradually dissatisfaction arose, and Matthew Wilks himself, in his latter days, felt the need of some reform. It was too formidable an affair for him to touch when the infirmities of age were growing heavier on the venerable man.

John Campbell was appointed as his successor in 1829, and he brought to the pastorate ideas of Congregational order and discipline united to boldness and energy of an extraordinary description. He aimed at framing a new constitution after the Congregational model, but his plans met with resistance. The details of the story are too minute and complicated for these pages. Opposite convictions came out face to face, and violent feeling was engendered on both sides. It was a conflict between the Calvinistic Methodist sentiment, in which popular preaching swallowed up everything, and opinions with regard to Independency, which insisted upon determinate ecclesiastical principle as necessary to church prosperity. The vital question really came to be, which of the parties should be victorious. The outward form of the struggle was whether Dr. Campbell should remain minister. Scenes occurred which were a scandal to religion, and the moot point had to be settled in a court of justice at the end of the year 1834. It is said that, though Whitefield did not

leave any trust deed for his chapels, "one of his last acts was to register both the Tabernacle and the Tottenham Court Chapel as places of worship for nonconformist congregations calling themselves Independents." This is very curious, seeing that Whitefield was not an Independent in any other sense than that he did much as he pleased, and adopted no organization such as is generally understood by the name of Independency. At all events, the result of litigation was that Dr. Campbell was established in his pastorate, and afterwards communicants in both places of worship constituted themselves churches of the modern congregational order.

An important step was taken by Congregationalists so early as 1833 in reference to psalmody. Watts and Doddridge's hymns, with supplements of different kinds, had been used in places of worship ; but it was inconvenient to have so many books. It was resolved to prepare a comprehensive volume, and a committee was chosen for the purpose ; but a large part of the labour devolved on Mr. Conder, who was regarded as poet laureate of the body. He acted as editor of the hymn book.

At the time when this volume was projected, another literary undertaking commenced. The Church of England had its Boyle, Warburton, and Bampton Lectures : not in ambitious rivalry, but in respectful imitation, the Congregational Lecture was set on foot, "to illustrate the evidence and importance of the great doctrines of revelation, to exhibit the true principles of philology in their application to such doctrines, to prove the accordance and identity of

genuine philosophy with the records and discoveries of Scripture, and to trace the errors and corruptions which have existed in the Christian Church to their proper sources, and by the connexion of sound reasoning with the honest interpretation of God's holy word, to point out the methods of refutation and counteraction." These were the objects for which the lecture was established. Dr. Wardlaw, a well known Scotch Independent, was invited to break ground in this field of labour, and in 1833 the first course, after being delivered in the Congregational Library, was published to the world. The subject was "Christian Ethics," and the author took occasion in his prelections, to criticise mistakes in the method of pursuing inquiries on the subject, and especially in the attempt to deduce a scheme of virtue from the present character of human nature. He examined the system of Bishop Butler, and then explained his own view of the original principles of moral obligation—identifying morality and religion, asserting such identity to be a doctrine of Scripture, and finally resting his theory of morals on Divine revelation. This theory suggested certain difficulties and objections which it is impossible here to specify.¹ The course for 1834 was delivered by Dr. Vaughan, then Congregational minister at Kensington, and Professor of Ancient and Modern History in the University of London. His object was to explain the causes of the corruption of Christianity, and in

¹ An indication of the contents of these courses of lectures is all that can be required.

doing so he pointed to the tendencies of human nature, the misapprehensions of Judaism, the influence of Gentile philosophy, and the effect of ancient paganism. Mr. Gilbert, of Nottingham, delivered the lecture for 1835, on the doctrine of the atonement. His object was to establish the necessity of such a provision on *a priori* grounds—so far resembling Anselm's method, only selecting different points of argument,—proceeding on a ground similar to Leibnitz's view of Divine justice as a modification of benevolence. He maintained that merely paternal authority and correction in the government of the Almighty were incompatible with facts—for a father to assume the power of law and claim the right to inflict death on his offspring would be to rob himself of the attributes of paternity; and that there is ground for a distinction between fatherhood and kingship; and that the contrary opinion is founded on partial evidence. The human idea of absolute dominion the lecturer asserted to be inconsistent with just views of the Lord God, but the conception of a righteous administration of unchangeable Divine law was demanded both by reason and Scripture; and on this rested a main argument for the doctrine he advanced. The lecture for 1836 was undertaken by Dr. Henderson, who chose for his theme "Divine Inspiration," and dwelt upon different modes of inspiration, which he enumerated and illustrated under the heads of internal suggestion, audible sounds, *Urim and Thummim*, dreams, visions, and the reappearance of the departed. The first he defined as immediate, the second as consisting in a miraculous intervention of

secondary causes. The fact of inspiration he established by positive proofs, and proceeded to examine the theory of verbal inspiration, which he admitted in some instances and rejected in others. He finally entered on the canon of Scripture and the cessation of miraculous gifts. Dr. Redford, in 1837, delivered a course on "Holy Scripture Verified," by an appeal to facts of science, history, and human consciousness. He thus marked out a wide field of inquiry, which he traversed under the guidance of scientific and philosophical lights, such as were then recognized by evangelical divines.

These lectures, more or less intrinsically valuable, are further interesting as illustrative of theological methods and opinions prevalent with Congregational divines at that period, and deserve to be compared with earlier treatises, showing an advance in literary and other respects as to modes of treating Christian evidence and other departments of theology. Throughout a tenacious hold was kept on evangelical principles lying at the root of puritanical divinity.

Three examples of pastoral efficiency may be selected from the London Congregational brotherhood during the reign of William IV. Paddington chapel now is more ornate than it was then. It wore an aspect in early days such as would now be esteemed by no means architecturally graceful; but a noble congregation was there gathered, including persons of wealth, education, and high social position. Amongst the rest at the time of which I speak, or a little earlier, the mother of the gifted historian Mr. Buckle used to attend, and the promising boy was

brought up to worship at that place. James Stratton occupied the pulpit, a man of singular gifts, as remarkable in appearance as he was in voice, mind, and utterance. He could utter dulcet tones, and at once swell into an organ-like burst of power, while his eye, now soft and gentle, would then, eagle-like, dilate into a fiery flash ; and his thoughts, harmonizing with his voice and his countenance, passed from what was tender and pensive to what was grand and even sublime. In his old days I have heard him speak of his early ministry with a pardonable enthusiasm, and to use his own expression, there was an *aroma* in many a Sunday morning worship full of celestial fragrance. Equally remarkable for singularities and for a unity into which they were all reduced, he resembled one of Rembrandt's pictures, which present a contrast and at the same time a harmony of deep shadow and brilliant light. He was a man of considerable culture, of poetical temperament, yet sometimes manifesting philosophical insight, and avoiding ruts of language as well as thinking so as to give freshness to his discourses, not common in those days. He appeared as a Christian prophet carried away by the inspiration of his theme, penetrating into the depths of Divine truth, and clothing his ideas with a quaint beauty altogether his own. He was an eminent preacher, but possessed little adaptation for organizing his powerful Church into forms of concentrated action.

In this respect it was far otherwise with another pastor, who has already been mentioned in connexion with the city of Bristol. John Leifchild, who, soon

after removing from that sphere became Doctor of Divinity, was invited to Craven Chapel in the year 1831. Craven Chapel is situated in a back thoroughfare, approached from Regent Street by an uninviting passage; but thither for many years might be seen throngs of people going to hear the popular minister. He had a leonine look, which over-awed his congregation, coupled however now and then with a smile really seraphic. Whatever the calibre of his discourse at the beginning and the middle, he could touch a pitch of fervour at the close, rarely surpassed; and Justice Talfourd, who as a youth heard him in Hornton Street Chapel, where his mother worshipped, used to say that Leifchild came very near his idea of the Apostle Paul. His sermons were constructed upon the principle of reaching a climax in the peroration; all prepared for that. He embodied his own ideal; but at times there was an artificiality in the structure of his discourses too obvious, and more naturalness would have deepened the effect. Closing parts of his sermons have been compared to a discharge of artillery, and, to minds of a certain order, were perfectly overwhelming. His appeals to the conscience were singularly penetrating, and were very often followed by the decided conversion of careless and hardened sinners to the service and love of God. At Exeter Hall he was for many years a favourite speaker, the commencement and close of his speeches evoking rapturous applause. Though he produced wonderful effects at public meetings, the pulpit was his throne, where he ruled his audience with a kind of imperial sway. His skill in the introduction of

religious topics into common conversation was very remarkable, and he abounded in anecdotes illustrative of Scripture truth and spiritual experience. I never knew a man who seemed to make the parlour so much a place for religious instruction and impression. He was always intent on saving souls, and never lost an opportunity of lodging some religious thought in the minds of those he met; and he made Craven a hive of religious industry. The work carried on there, the societies formed, the meetings held, the subscriptions raised, and the number of people employed, rendered his congregation an example to all others. On his tombstone are inscribed these words of his own : “ I will creep as well as I can to Thy gates ; I will die at Thy door ; yea, I will be found dead on the threshold of Thy mercy, with the ring of that door in my hand.”

But the Weigh-house Chapel had attractions peculiarly its own. A congregation, after worshipping many years at the King’s Weigh House, Eastcheap, removed to Fish Street, opposite the Monument ; and there for many years Thomas Binney, who had attracted public notice in the smaller building, sustained ministrations of an uncommon order. He had peculiarities, even eccentricities, such as, coupled with genuine qualities, increased rather than diminished his popularity ; and an address he delivered on laying the first stone of his new chapel made a great noise outside his own denominational circle. He said that “ the civil magistrate is not appointed of God for the purpose of saving men’s souls, but of protecting each equally in saving his own ” ; “ and that the Church of

England is the most discordant and divided Christian denomination in the land." There was nothing in all this particularly exasperating, inasmuch as the same things might be said, and probably were said, by clergymen of the Establishment. But one sentence much talked of at the time is surrounded with some mystery. The sentence, it appears, formed no part of the original address, but was printed in notes accompanying its publication. It was to the effect that "the Church of England destroyed more souls than it saved," a most unjustifiable expression, whatever might be the exact words. Many Dissenters were distressed, whilst Churchmen felt extremely indignant. The author contended that not the Episcopal Church, but the State Establishment was that to which he alluded; and moreover, that what he really said was this: If the representations of some Evangelical clergymen were true with regard to the tendency of baptismal regeneration, which he regarded as taught in the Prayer Book, then the conclusion would follow which he had dared to express. I have heard him say that he did not give it as his own personal opinion. I am not defending his language; I am only stating what years afterwards was his explanation. I would merely add that he was not when I was intimate with him in later life what any one would call a rabid Dissenter. He greatly enjoyed joining in the morning and evening service of the Church of England, believed in a modified kind of episcopal government, and in very plain terms eschewed what may be called ultra-Independency.

It was remarked by John Howe respecting a

friend, that he was wrought "*luto meliore*, of better, or more accurately figured and finely turned clay." And Calamy said of Howe, "There is that in his looks and carriage which discovers that he has something within which is uncommonly great, and tends to excite veneration." Gregory Nyssen said of Basil that his "face was attuned to the harmony of the soul." Somewhat similar things might be said of Thomas Binney. Many still remember his portly frame, noble head, ample brow, thin scattered locks, expressive eye, and changeful countenance, which could be fierce with indignation, and could also smile in gentlest love, even as a little child.

He liked to throw his thoughts into the form of ratiocination, and he spent his main power in reticulating joints between positions and inferences, between premisses and conclusions. He was more at home in building up logical structures, than in digging up facts and principles on which they rest. His imagination was subordinate to his judgment, was never touched by mystic influences, and never soared into transcendental realms. In thought, as in other things, he was a thorough Englishman, more practical than speculative; having keen common sense, rather than insight such as leads into abstract regions. I have often thought he would have made an eminent lawyer, for he had talents of the forensic kind—was admirable in stating a case, explaining a law, defending a position, and sifting evidence. In concluding an argument, establishing a position, or illustrating a point, he wrought not in frost, but in fire; what he said or wrote appeared,

not in a dry light, but with much glow, sometimes reaching even furnace heat.

During the few years to which I limit myself in this chapter, one of the greatest encouragements afforded to the Congregational body in London and elsewhere proceeded from visits to this country of men who had done distinguished work in foreign missionary work, and who came home to tell of the success which had followed their labours. Dr. Philip and John Williams were the most distinguished of these visitors.

Dr. Philip brought over with him two Africans, one a chief named Tzatzoe, the other named Stoffles, deacon of a Church planted on the Kat River, a man of rude but marvellous eloquence.

“I wish to tell you,” he would say, “what the Bible has done for Africa. What would have become of the Hottentot nation, had you kept the word of God to yourselves? When you received the word of God, you thought of other nations who had not that word. When the Bible came among us we were naked; we lived in caves of the earth and on the tops of the mountains; we had no clothes, we painted our bodies with red paint. At first we were surprised to hear the truths of the Bible. The Bible charmed us out of the caves and from the tops of the mountains. The Bible made us throw away all our customs and practices, and we lived among civilized men. We are tame men now. Now we know there is a God; now we know we are accountable creatures before God. But what was our state before the Bible came? We knew none of these things. We knew nothing about heaven. We knew not who made heaven and earth. The Bible is the only light for every man that dwells on the face of the earth. I have travelled

with the missionaries in taking the Bible to the Bushmen, and other nations. Where the word of God has been preached the Bushman has thrown away his bows and arrows. I have accompanied the Bible to the Caffre nation, and when the Bible spoke, the Caffre threw away his shield and all his vain customs. I went to Lattakoo, and they threw away their assagais and became the children of God. The only way to reconcile man to man is to instruct man in the truths of the Bible."

The impression made on crowded audiences by speeches of this kind, accompanied by expressive movements and gestures, which almost translated the words as he went on, may be much more easily imagined than described. And I well remember that when I accompanied him at Windsor on a visit to the Royal Chapel, he remarked, while gazing awestruck on that edifice, "It has all the softness of the green earth and all the grandeur of the mountain precipice." In some such words what he said was translated by Dr. Philip; and the tone of his speeches was of the same character, highly imaginative, intensely emotional, and full of life and beauty.

John Williams entertained and inspired his audiences with characteristic details of Polynesian civilization, and the tendency of his visit altogether was to awaken a livelier interest in Christian missions, to feed afresh the altar fires of English Churches, and diffuse warmth through the whole atmosphere of religious society wherever he went. His scientific knowledge added to the influence of his visit; he was the honoured guest of illustrious persons, and

was entertained at Chatsworth with great cordiality by the late Duke of Devonshire.

Another returned missionary about the same time,—Richard Knill, who had laboured in India and Russia,—travelled throughout the country, and wherever he went he made himself at home, in the private house as well as on the public platform. “In season and out of season” he strove to impress gospel truths upon young and old, and to awaken zeal in the hearts of all who professed themselves disciples of Jesus Christ. His unaffected simplicity, and the freshness with which he could insist on oft-repeated exhortations, and relate for the hundredth time facts which he had witnessed, were such as I never saw in any other man.

Nearly coincident with these awakening visits was the death of Dr. McAll, who expired in 1838. After a ministry at Macclesfield he was, in 1827, invited to succeed Mr. Roby, whom he described as *greatly good*, in the pastorate at Moseley Street Chapel, Manchester. No man stood higher in the estimation of his brethren, and eulogies pronounced on him whilst living, and in stronger terms after his death, can be accounted for only by his possessing, in an extraordinary degree, high personal as well as public qualities. He is thought by some to have had a mind more acute than comprehensive, and certainly he seems to have amassed surprising stores of knowledge. Accounts by surviving friends agree with admiration expressed by contributors to his biography. “His acuteness,” says one, “bordered on excessive subtlety, in which respect he resembled, I imagine, the late Dr. Thomas

Brown, to whom indeed in person, temperament, and mind he bore a very considerable likeness. His ingenuity was all but inexhaustible." "He had been a speculatist," says another; "but he learned a better lesson, in the spirit of deep yet lofty devotion of blended delight and awe to model his mind to that of God."¹ In reading his sermons published after his death, nothing strikes one so much as his exuberance of diction, a continual flow of sentences couched in eloquent terms; and this, it has been affirmed by those who knew him, is but a specimen of the style which he could command in extemporaneous speeches. Indeed, it has been thought his spoken words surpassed his written compositions. He was not satisfied with the praise he received, which seems to have been rather too abundant. "I have admiration enough," he would say, "but I want to see conversion and edification." The following incident is beautiful: A friend asked him on his death-bed if the gospel he had preached to others now occupied his thoughts, and was dear to his heart. "Yes," he said, with a smile; "its *very core*; I cannot now trouble myself with its developments."²

The excitement of this period, described already in many ways, extended to educational institutes. A spirit of improved action penetrated Independent colleges. The academy which had been at Axminster for three and thirty years, under the presidency

¹ See "Life and Character of Dr. Wardlaw," prefixed to *McAll's Discourses*, lxxxvi., xci., cxv.

² *Ibid.*, clxxvi.

of Mr. Small, and had materially helped to supply the wants of the Churches in the west of England, was removed to Exeter in 1829, and placed under the care of Dr. Payne. Dr. Payne's attainments and reputation gave a spur to the educational impulse moving in Devonshire Churches, but prosperity was not long lived ; another change had to be made, when the institution was placed on a sounder basis, and a new edifice was erected at Plymouth, under the name of the Western College. The academy at Wymondley, supported by the Coward Trustees, was removed to Byng Place, Torrington Square, where it was affiliated with the neighbouring educational institute, and the students passed through the arts course of the London University College. Theology was provided for by the appointment of Dr. Jenkyn as resident principal.

The London University, based on broad principles of education, at a time when Oxford and Cambridge excluded Dissenters from taking degrees, enjoyed great popularity amongst Dissenters. Lord Brougham took a leading part in the institution ; persons of different denominations were on the council ; Dr. Cox, already noticed as a leading Baptist, was librarian : and the Coward Trustees thought it a good plan to avail themselves of the university provision for general learning. Experience proved, perhaps in consequence of imperfect plans for the theological department, that the smaller college was overshadowed by the larger one. University studies were more assiduously pursued than those which were theological.

The name of college by degree excluded the

modest appellation of academy, and Horace's words were humorously applied to this incident, *collegisse juvat*. The growing tendency reached Yorkshire ; for the academy which had existed at Idle—and unfortunately derived from it an inauspicious title—took the name of Airedale College, which, in 1834, was removed to a new building at Undercliffe, near Bradford. Walter Scott, pastor of an Independent Church at Rothwell, in Northamptonshire, succeeded Mr. Vint as principal. Contemporary with this change occurred another at Rotherham, where Dr. W. H. Stowell followed in the wake of Dr. Bennett, and for a while vigorously sustained this institution, which traced its origin back to Scott of Heckmondwike, a famous Yorkshire patriarch of the former century.

An important undertaking in the midland counties appeared in 1838, when, owing to the liberality of two ladies, a plan for ministerial education was started in Spring Hill House, near Birmingham. In this enterprise John Angell James took a deep interest, and so did another Birmingham minister, Timothy East, a man of vigorous mind and active habits, who, after a notable pastorate at Frome, in Somersetshire, won wide popularity in the midland centre of industrial activity. They succeeded in securing the services of Henry Rogers, renowned as a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, and of Messrs. Watts and Barker. The institution for a while was carried on within the walls of a private residence, and, in 1856, a convenient edifice was opened at Moseley, near Birmingham, for the accommodation of students.

It is time to turn to another denomination. The Baptist section of the London board acted in harmony with Independents in reference to Unitarian members, and shared in the responsibility of measures which led to the Presbyterian secession. Joseph Ivimey, pastor of the Church in Keppel Street, and successor to John Martin, Andrew Fuller's antagonist, took an active part in opposition to Mr. Aspland. In so doing, whilst acting in harmony with other Baptists, he differed from them in a zealous resistance to the measures adopted by the board to promote Catholic emancipation. He was a good man of contracted views, and a stanch upholder of strict communion. Upon that question a diversity of opinion continued in Baptist circles, but an advance on the side of open communion was obvious. The two principal opposing champions died within a short time of each other. Robert Hall's death was in the month of February, 1831, at Bristol. Almost his whole life had been a lingering martyrdom. No thought of heaven touched him more than that conveyed by the words, "there shall be no more pain." The paroxysms he endured were most distressing, and his spirit passed away in a storm of agony. His wife, overcome by a spectacle of more than ordinary anguish, exclaimed, "This can't be dying," when he replied, "It is death, it is death, death to the sufferings of this body." "But you are comfortable in your mind?" it was said. "Very comfortable, very comfortable," he answered. "Come, Lord Jesus; come——" "quickly," added a loving voice. A look of complacent delight adopted the word which he had no strength himself to utter.

Mr. Kinghorn's death occurred in the month of September, 1832, at Norwich. He was attacked with fever, and in a few days died ; I find no account of his last hours. I never saw Robert Hall, but Joseph Kinghorn I knew well. " His preaching," says one who knew him better than I did, " was full of thoughts that breathe and words that burn. It exhibited all the force of his intellect, combined with all the fervour of his heart, so that every sermon that he preached resembled ' the sea of glass which was mingled with fire.' His heart was anointed with a holy unction, which diffused its fragrance over all his feelings and his words ; and his eyes often became fountains of tears when he spoke of the hopes which the gospel inspires, and when he told the enemies of the Cross that their end was destruction. And when, on such occasions, his voice broke (and it sometimes did with tremulous impressiveness), a burst of holy eloquence was sure to follow, which thrilled and subdued and overwhelmed."¹

Joseph John Gurney, the Quaker, spoke over his grave, and a clergyman of the Establishment said, "If half Norwich had died, the loss would not have been so much felt."

When these two eminent men were gone, others remained to do the work and to sustain the repute of their denomination. Perhaps Dr. Cox, of Hackney, stood before the public most prominently. He officiated on a great number of special occasions, and his literary tastes and his office as librarian of

¹ The Rev. John Alexander's funeral sermon for his friend.

the London University secured for him an introduction to society beyond the limits of his own body. His appearance was prepossessing, and though there was a want of naturalness in his manner, his addresses from the pulpit and the platform were often effective, and always well received. He combined to an extraordinary degree evangelical zeal with a courteous behaviour towards those who differed from him, of which he gave an instance in his continued friendship with Mr. Aspland, who had been a fellow student of his at the Baptist College, Bristol. In another way he manifested a comprehensive sympathy. He was a decided anti-state-churchman, yet ever maintained friendly relations with clergymen of the Establishment. Dr. Steane, one of the honorary secretaries of the Evangelical Alliance, a man of broad, catholic sympathies, was probably, next to Dr. Cox, most eagerly sought after in public services during the space included in this volume; and there were two other ministers who made a mark on Baptist history. Dr. Price was minister of the congregation in Devonshire Square, an influential community in the denomination. More as an author than as a preacher, Dr. Price became known to his brethren and the Christian public in general. He wrote a history of *Protestant Nonconformity in England from the Reformation under Henry VIII.* It was published in 1838, and pronounced by critics of a different school to be "able and well written." Two years before this Mr. Conder transferred to his hands the editorship of the *Eclectic Review.* A man of much bolder character, and with a striking individ-

uality of mind, was John Howard Hinton, who ventured upon new lines of theological thought, and wrought out a system of divinity altogether his own, printed in the pages of the *Oxford Encyclopædia*. He had no sympathy whatever with the high Calvinistic tenets which continued in some Baptist quarters when he was young, but he was a thorough predestinarian. Jonathan Edwards, Andrew Fuller, Thomas Scott, and Edward Williams were divines for whom he had great respect, but he was too independent and original to swear in the words of any master.

He held the opinion, that, but for the interposition of Divine mercy, the sentence of physical death would have been executed immediately after the disobedience of Adam, and would have prevented the human race from continuing in existence. Moreover he said, as the covenant with Adam gave security that in case of transgression no posterity should exist, now that he has had descendants, they live, not under that covenant or its curses, but under a new system, which is one of individual probation and personal responsibility. There were two points on which he largely insisted : first, that what is called man's *inability* to believe and obey the gospel is entirely moral—in other words, it is *indisposition*, neither more nor less ; and secondly, that faith is essential to the offering of efficacious prayer, hence, in the spiritual order of things, faith comes before true prayer, and this ought to be kept in view by all who exhort others to the practice of Christian duties. He was one of the clearest and most logical

thinkers I ever knew ; given his premisses, and there was no resisting his conclusion. The clearness of his perceptions and the precision of his language were observable in all his instructions, and I have heard him lecture on geology, with the elements of which he was well acquainted, so as to secure from his audience equal admiration of two qualities which do not always go together, perspicacity and perspicuity.

It was with the Baptist denomination as with the Independent, new life was inspired by missionary appeals. Interest circulated round two centres, the West Indies and the East Indies. Knibb and Burchell, not to mention others, were devoted labourers amidst the negroes of Jamaica. The institution of slavery in many ways created difficulties, and slaveholders, with their friends, set their faces against such work as these brethren successfully accomplished. An insurrection broke out among the black bondsmen before the missionaries were aware, and when its origin was inquired into, it appeared that impatience under oppression, and a vague idea that liberty was at hand, had fallen like a spark on a train of gunpowder. Excesses were committed, and much valuable property belonging to the mission was destroyed. Under these circumstances Knibb and Burchell visited England, and a crowd assembled to hear their report of West Indian missionary affairs. The committee had been careful to enjoin upon the speakers as much of calmness as possible in stating the case ; but Knibb, full of fire, was adverse to what he considered temporising counsels. He told his audience, with looks of indignation and tones of

thunder, that missions and slavery were incompatible, that slaves would not be allowed to worship God until slavery was abolished. The secretary pulled the coat of the excited speaker, who, conscious he carried the sympathy of his audience, declared : “ Whatever may be the consequences, I will speak. At the risk of my connexion with the society, and all I hold dear, I will avow this—that, if the friends of missions will not hear me, I will turn and tell it to my God ; nor will I desist until this greatest of curses, slavery, is removed, and ‘ glory to God in the highest,’ inscribed on the British flag ! ” The words had just the effect which might naturally be expected. The roof and walls of Spa Fields Chapel, where they were uttered, rang with shouts of deafening applause. The excitement spread into all the Baptist Churches, and received a response from all sorts of people. Meetings were held, resolutions were passed ; and, soon afterwards, the Abolition Bill was laid before the House of Commons. At the annual meeting of the society that year (1833) Mr. Burchell said there were then twenty-four Churches in Jamaica, and the conduct of the negroes belonging to them during the late disturbances gave a testimony to the purity of their faith ; for he never heard one of them throughout the whole riot use a harsh expression respecting their persecutors. Deep feeling inspired liberal action. Knibb moved, that as Government recommended a grant of between £5000 and £6000 to meet the damage done, the society should raise above £6000 more. People at the meeting contributed £2700, that sum soon rose to £10,000, and ultimately to

nearly £13,000. Fresh zeal in the missionary enterprise followed ; tidings sent over to England after the return of the missionaries continued to keep alive the feelings they had kindled.

Another centre round which missionary interest in Baptist Churches chiefly revolved was India, where, since the Serampore rupture, two distinct agencies were carried on. Happily the breach respecting Serampore was healed, and the different parties at Calcutta co-operated again. The Rev. W. H. Pearce, from India, visited England in 1837, and described the labours of the Calcutta brethren. He spoke cheerfully of the progress of education, and its undermining effect upon the superstitions of the land. At the same time he reminded his hearers that it would be lamentable indeed if Indian students should be left to become infidels and propagate unbelief as they emerged from the depths of paganism.

The General Baptist denomination had in 1809 contemplated a foreign mission, but it was not accomplished until 1816. Two agents were despatched to India. They were sent to Orissa, and began work there in 1822. The mass of the people were Hindus ; they had a Juggernaut shrine of terrible popularity, and poverty and disease ravaged the district. The missionaries did what others were doing in similar fields—in the market and bazaar, in city streets and village thoroughfares. They gathered up many a touching incident, which, when related in England, deepened impressions made before. Work in India was found to be slow, but the toilers there and the helpers at home were not disheartened.

Taking a broad glance at the "three denominations," it must be acknowledged that increasing energy, at the time I am speaking of, more or less marked each of them. They rose to higher resolves, to nobler achievements. The passing of parliamentary and municipal reform bills caused an increase of political influence amongst Dissenters. In large towns successful merchants and tradesmen came to the front. If old nonconformist families declined or expired in some districts, especially the rural ones, new families arose, enriched by improved manufactures and more enterprising commerce. The corn law agitation brought increased social power to Dissenters in some places; spiritual influences, already described or hereafter to be pointed out, were far more mighty factors in the happy change. The common result was an amount of liberality and effort in the support of missions, in the building of chapels, and in the employment of agencies, public and private, which would have astonished immeasurably the representatives of the old dissent.

CHAPTER VIII.

METHODISM.

1830-1837.

LOUDS and darkness, broken by gleams of light, fell on the face of Methodist affairs during the interval between 1832 and 1837. The cholera visited this country at the first of these dates, and carried off one of the foremost ministers. Dr. Adam Clarke was advanced in life, and on account of infirmities had been placed on the supernumerary list of preachers. The Shetland Isles were to him objects of special interest, and the temporal and spiritual welfare of dwellers in that bleak region he continued to promote to the close of life. In the late summer of 1832 his heart was almost broken by tidings of a frightful gale, which had wrecked thirty boats of the fishermen, and plunged the crews, amounting to above a hundred and fifty, in a watery grave. He hastened home from the west of England, and in shattered health fell an easy victim to the scourge then sweeping over the land. Altogether, six well known leaders of the Wesleyan denomination were called to their rest within less than a year. Richard Watson was of the number, and such a loss inflicted indescribable sorrow. He was only fifty-two,

and in all the ripe maturity of his superior powers. "I am a poor, vile worm," he said just before his death ; "but then the worm is permitted to crawl out of the earth into the garden of the Lord.

‘I shall behold His face,
I shall His power adore,
And sing the wonders of His grace
For evermore.’

We shall see strange sights some day ; not different however from what we may realize by faith. But it is not this, not the glitter of glory, not the diamond and topaz—no, it is God ; He is all in all.”

The disunion of a previous year blends its memory with these bereavements. A doctrinal dispute had arisen in the town of Derby. People there were infected with a sort of Pelagian error. They denied that saving faith is the gracious gift of God : it is, they said, an exercise of a naturally inherent power ; it comes simply as the product of our will. Disorderly religious meetings accompanied the maintenance of this dogma, and Conference had to interfere, the result of which was that expulsions and secessions took place. However, the Conference of 1833 received good news of an accession of twenty-four thousand new members in Great Britain and Ireland, and nearly two thousand on the mission stations. Methodism had taken goodly strides in Canada, and a converted Red Indian chief came over to tell of wonders done by the gospel among the children of the forest. In Stockholm an eminent missionary, George Scott, created new interest in the truths of

Christianity among the Lutherans ; and in Würtemberg a lay brother was doing much good amidst scattered villages on the mountain side. In the Pacific, work went forward ; New Zealand and the Friendly Isles were brought within range of missionary operations ; also in Africa the gospel made progress, and the translation of holy Scripture proceeded in missionary hands.

Soon after Conference had been hearing of these events, a controversy arose of an unprecedented kind. The Anti-State agitation entered the Methodist connexion, which it had never done in the same way before. Joseph Rayner Stephens, a minister stationed at Ashton-under-Lyne, had become a zealous advocate for disestablishment. He attended a meeting, saying he did not appear in his *official* capacity ; that the subject of dissent had seldom or never been mooted amongst Methodists, and that he came simply as a private individual. At the same time he handed in a list of one hundred Methodist signatures to be appended to a memorial proposed at the meeting. He made what would now be called a thorough liberation appeal, using strong language against the Established Church. This was certainly a new Methodist attitude, and afterwards he accepted the office of corresponding secretary to an association which was formed. The chairman of the district told him the matter must be submitted to the next district meeting. No question arose as to what he had actually said ; he only contended that his conduct involved no breach of Methodist law—that Wesley, during his life, had said strong things against the

Establishment, and so had the Conference since his death. He asked whether his course was unlawful? The district committee decided that his proceedings were contrary to the principles and practices of Methodism; that this should at once be publicly declared, in order to shield brethren from the suspicion of sympathizing with him, and that he must be suspended until the next Conference. High-handed measures were taken on both sides, each strongly condemning what the other did. Different opinions were expressed at the meeting of Conference, but throughout, the incompatibility of Mr. Stephens' acts with Methodist law seems to have been *assumed* on the part of those who arraigned the accused. Methodist law is a subject requiring study, especially when it is *common*, rather than statute; and therefore I venture to offer no opinion on the subject.

In the course of the debate it was remarked that Wesley and his successor had always evinced an inflexible regard to national institutions, and especially for the interests of the Established Church. After this another speaker, well known for witticisms, said, "Wesley's bearing toward the Church was like that of a rower in a boat; his face was always steadily fixed on the Church, but every stroke of his oars took him farther away from it." The conclusion reached was, that if Stephens would give a pledge, not as to his future *opinions*, but as to his future *conduct*, if he would promise not to *act* any more as he had done, his ministerial position would be restored. This pledge he declined to give, and at once retired from the body. It was the only course which, in honour to

himself and his opponents, he could adopt. Had the matter ended there, no one could have condemned either party, but in connexion with it there arose violent proceedings on the part of dissentients. A cry arose for stopping supplies, and an indulgence in severe recrimination followed on the part of the majority. I am afraid that in some instances passion was mistaken for principle; but at the same time there was amongst the disputants a good deal of honesty and conscientiousness in the maintenance of discordant opinions; and now that time has healed the wound, especially since the *Œcumical Conference*, no rightly disposed person would like to re-open it.

Outside of this particular controversy, there floated in the atmosphere of Methodism a kind of nebulous feeling, ready at any moment to blend with and strengthen every agitation which arose. Inducements to change Methodist laws were frequent. The oligarchical and democratic tendencies came again and again into collision. Old grievances, such as those relative to organs, were not forgotten, and smouldering embers of dissatisfaction lay ready to blaze when stirred by passing occasions. A trouble occurred in 1834, which did not at first seem likely to be of much consequence. A scheme had been proposed for the education of the rising ministry, and the report upon it was objected to by Dr. Warren, a minister of superior abilities and extensive influence. He objected to details of arrangement. He did not like that certain proposed officers should be appointed to consider the contemplated course of education. He

suggested other names. At committee meetings he criticised the mode of doing business, and protested against what he looked upon as "artifice." Secrets of the committee room were published, and varying reports given of what took place led to unhappy disputes. The issue raised was, did Dr. Warren disapprove of the plan in *principle*? or did he disapprove of the *details*? In the earliest stage he had sanctioned the former: had he in this respect altered his mind? or did he still sanction the scheme in general, and only oppose the nominations to office in particular? At length he confessed that, in consequence of what had occurred, he had changed his opinion on the entire project. This brought into play plenty of irritation. When the committee reported their plan Warren proposed an amendment, and in his speech attacked the character of the committee, especially that of one leading member. When Conference had closed, Dr. Warren issued a pamphlet, giving the substance of his speech, with a condemnation of the new theological institution. To make this appeal to the public against a decision of Conference was regarded by the chairman of the Manchester district as a violation of Wesleyan law; and at a special district meeting he was conditionally suspended, the final disposal of the case being left to the next Conference. This provoked fresh resistance. A legal process ensued, and Warren was forbidden the use of Oldham Street Chapel. Warren now appealed to the Court of Chancery to reinstate him in his pulpit, and the case was argued before the Vice-Chancellor. His lordship, after referring to the

Wesleyan Methodists,—and saying, “To that body we are indebted for a large portion of the religious feeling of this country, and a great portion of that in other parts of the world,”—refused to interfere with the proceedings of the district committee, and concluded his judgment in words used at the Conference of 1795: “O brethren, be as zealous for peace and unity in your respective societies as your preachers have been in this blessed Conference. Let the majorities and minorities on both sides exercise the utmost forbearance towards each other; let them mutually concede one to the other as far as possible; and, by thus bearing each other’s burdens, fulfil the law of Christ. Let all resentment be buried in eternal oblivion, and let contention and strife be for ever banished from the borders of our Israel.”¹ An appeal to the court of the Lord Chancellor followed, who affirmed the judgment previously pronounced. At the Conference held in Sheffield (1835) Dr. Warren was expelled. After this he threw himself into “The Grand Central” movement for altering the Wesleyan constitution, and at last abandoned dissent altogether by obtaining episcopal ordination.

I have confined myself to a statement of facts. They speak for themselves. Whatever might be Dr. Warren’s views, from the beginning he involved himself in a war of personalities. He was jealous of Dr. Bunting; no doubt he had a right, if he saw fit, to criticise his policy, but for his virulent language

¹ Report of trial.

there could be no excuse; and when we find him at last entering the Established Church, we cannot give him credit for any deep ecclesiastical principle in aiding the purposes of the Central Association. They pointed in the direction of a stronger form of dissent than that of the Wesleyan body, when he was on the point of giving up dissent altogether. But it must be admitted that while there was intense provocation on the part of Warren and his friends, there was not such conciliation and forbearance as there might have been on the other side. Alterations relative to the expulsion of members, and financial affairs and some other matters, were made by the Conference in 1835; and Dr. Smith, in his *History of Methodism*, remarks: "There can be no doubt that these alterations were conceived in a liberal spirit, that they added considerably to the security and influence of the Methodist laity, and operated as an important check to any misuse of ministerial power"; but, he proceeds to say, "it is equally clear that they *were too late and too limited* fully to answer the intended purpose. Perhaps no seven years of British history ever wrought such a change in the political opinions of the people, and in their estimate of rational liberty as those which elapsed from 1828 to 1835." "If the Conference had passed those measures in 1825, when they were first called for, they would have been hailed as a great boon, and the legislation of Methodism would have deserved credit for being rather before the age; but in 1835 they did not come up to public expectation, and were so entrenched in cautions, and surrounded with protective clauses, as

to be generally inoperative.”¹ The whole story illustrates the mischiefs of delaying needed reform. In the following year (1836) a development on the clerical side of Methodism appeared in a new regulation that ministers should be ordained by laying on of hands—a seemly custom in harmony with New Testament practice, but much in advance of the lay idea of itinerants adopted by Wesley in the eighteenth century.

Coincident with this development in the old society was the origin of a new Methodist denomination, arising out of the late distressing discords. To the New Connexion under Kilham, to the Primitive Connexion under Bourne and Clowes, to say nothing of the Bryanite division in the west of England, there was now added “the Wesleyan Methodist Association.” The names of the leaders were David Rowland and Robert Eckett; and both being men of administrative capacity as well as of energetic spirit, they moulded an organization on Methodist principles, with a strong lay infusion into the conferential body—a plan longed for in all aspirations after Methodist reform since the death of John Wesley. Elected representatives were to compose the annual assembly, and their number was to be regulated by the number of members in each circuit. A schedule of doctrines was drawn up, embodying the theological principles of the original Connexion; and when this new system had become consolidated, in the course of about five years, a foundation-deed on the popular

¹ Vol. iii. p. 316.

basis was adopted in 1840. When, however, the Methodist Association had been formed, and its laws settled, Mr. Eckett and his friends claimed the same unswerving loyalty to the new constitution which Wesleyans of the original body claimed for the old one.

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUEEN, PARLIAMENT, LAW, AND RELIGION.

1837-1850.

WE now reach the reign of our present gracious sovereign. Coronation services are the most imposing of those known in Westminster Abbey. On June 18th, 1837, Queen Victoria entered the west door, and after a hush of silence the choristers began, "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord." As the music softly floated round pillar and arch, she walked up the nave and entered the choir. The litany followed; then the first part of the holy communion, as far as the end of the Nicene Creed. A sermon was preached by the Bishop of London. The coronation oath succeeded. The Bible was brought from the altar by the archbishop, and kissed by the queen as she knelt on the steps. After the anointing, the choir sang "Veni, Creator Spiritus." After another prayer, the roof rang with the anthem, "Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon king, and all the people rejoiced and said, God save the king !

Long live the king! May the king live for ever!" The anointing, the investiture with the regalia, and the setting of the crown on the royal brow, followed amidst shouts of "God save the queen!" A blast of trumpets, the voices of people outside, and the booming of distant guns grandly responded, as the peers, before uncovered, assumed their coronets. The benediction having been pronounced, and the *Te Deum* chanted, homage was paid to the enthroned lady, and another loyal outburst rent the roof; the House of Commons, it is said for the first time, joining in that ceremony. The ordinance of the Lord's supper being completed, the Hallelujah Chorus concluded the august ritual, acknowledging the supremacy of Him "by whom kings reign and princes decree justice." It was a national act of religious worship, and ought to be recorded in the annals of English religion. No one who witnessed the solemnity can forget it.

Two notable sermons in connexion with that event have been preserved—one preached on the banks of the lake of Windermere, the other in St. Paul's Cathedral. Dr. Arnold expressed the prayer of all devout subjects, "that she may rejoice in the greatness of her kingdom, but still more if it shall have grown in goodness; that she may never be ashamed of Christ crucified, but confess Him in her household and in her court and in her government, no less than in her secret prayers; that she may love the poor and the distressed, and strive that the advance of society shall include the humblest of its members, that whilst some are starting forward with increased

speed, others may not fall behind, and so the order of the whole be broken.”¹

Sydney Smith gave utterance to national hopes, in a sermon at St. Paul’s.

“What limits to the glory and happiness of our native land, if the Creator should in His mercy have placed in the heart of this royal woman the rudiments of wisdom and mercy; and if, giving them time to expand and to bless our children’s children with her goodness, He should grant to her a long sojourning upon earth, and leave her to reign over us till she is well stricken in years. What glory! what happiness! what joy! what bounty of God!”

“Never,” it has been truly said, “were the feelings of the nation more nobly expressed than by this voice from the pulpit of the metropolitan cathedral.” The last passage has been called a “prophetic aspiration,” and it was connected with a practical appeal which probably reached the royal ear: “First and foremost, I think the new queen should bend her mind to the very serious consideration of educating the people; of the importance of this I think no reasonable doubt can exist. It does not in its effects keep pace with the exaggerated expectations of its injudicious advocates, but it presents the best chance of national improvement.”²

In this chapter I shall notice points where

¹ Sermon preached on the day of Her Majesty’s coronation in the chapel of Ambleside. Sermon xl. in volume *On Christian Life: its Course, its Hindrances, and its Helps*, p. 452.

² Sidney Smith’s *Works*, vol. iii. p. 320.

legislation touched upon religion, or religion led up to legislation; and the educational question is the first that meets us in this part of our story. Legislative measures in reference to education have always produced excitement. It is a strange but common mistake, to suppose that before government took up the subject, nothing, or next to nothing, had been accomplished for the elementary instruction of children. The fact is, that under the impulse of religious zeal large anticipatory efforts were made in this walk of beneficence.

The National School Society and the British School Society had for years adopted this as their own special business. Whereas in 1818 there was a scholar for every 17.25 persons, in 1833 there was a scholar for every 9.27 persons. Double the number of children trooped into day schools than had done so fifteen years before. Doubling the number in so short a time was no small achievement. And long before the establishment of board schools, between the years 1811 and 1841, 13,000 schools were established. Defective, no doubt, many of them were—far inferior to those now happily in existence. Yet they did good service at a time when some, now fallen into “the sear and yellow leaf,” were boys and girls. It is not honest dealing with the past to put down all value, in the account of education, to the credit of the present. And what was then done was chiefly spontaneous; little help, and that only for a little while before, could be obtained from Government coffers. Religion was the moving spring of the enterprise. Churchmen and Dissenters, in their religious capacity,

were the leaders, and they prompted others to help in the work. To Day schools, Sunday schools must be added. Here the advance was still greater ; and it should be remembered that many Sunday schools at an early period engaged in elementary teaching. In some instances, not only reading and spelling, but writing also was taught—imperfectly of course, but it was better than nothing.

Government began to take up popular instruction in the reign of William IV., and in 1834 the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed a vote of £20,000 for school buildings. Grants of about the same amount were voted in 1835, 1836, and 1837 ; and I well remember the effect they produced on private generosity.

At an early period, as soon as Government aid was available, and even before that, the religious difficulty cropped up—established Episcopalianism and voluntary Dissent came into conflict. The Church of England catechism was a watchword on one side, and a Conscience clause to prevent the imposition of the catechism on a Dissenter was a watchword on the other. No wonder, because Dissenters' children had no godfathers and godmothers, and therefore could not truthfully repeat the opening answers. Clergymen and Churchmen were not wanting who saw the justice of the demand in all cases of Government aided schools, meant for the use of Dissenters in common with others. Too many resisted the concession. Resistance produced bitter feeling, and where there was no bitter feeling, but a disposition on both sides to co-operate, there could be no getting

further in united action than the establishment of an infant school, where there was no room for a catechism at all. The great difference was, that Churchmen could not conceive of religious education apart from ecclesiastical dogmas ; and Dissenters saw no difficulty in the inculcation upon the young of fundamental truths in which all Christians, except the narrowest or the most heretical, are agreed. If there be not, at the bottom of Christianity, something accepted by all the disciples of Christ, something that is a basis of eternal hope, there is a dark prospect for the Church and the world.

In February, 1839, Government constituted a Board of Education for the first time. The board was especially charged with the formation of normal schools, and a vote of £30,000 was carried only by a majority of two. "The Lords, coming to the aid of the Church and their own party, hastened to condemn the new scheme, in an address to the Crown. Their lordships, however, received a courteous rebuke from the throne, and the scheme was vigorously carried out."¹ Economical difficulties, and still more religious ones, produced perplexity. From time to time the committee of the Privy Council continued to develop their plans, but they met with opposition both from Churchmen and Dissenters—from Churchmen who disapproved of education not based on the Church catechism; and from Dissenters holding the voluntary principle in reference to religious education as well as to Church support. The latter at that period did

¹ May's *Constitutional History*, vol. iii. p. 415.

not believe, except in a few instances, that secular and spiritual education could be separated ; and that as they should be conjoined, they ought to be left to voluntary operations. State aid for education such persons could not conscientiously accept ; but there were others who, considering that State aid might be deemed co-extensive with State control—and no further,—thought that, without any breach of the voluntary principle regarding religion, they could consistently receive Government assistance for secular education, no interference being attempted by Government with religious lessons given to the children.

A bill in reference to labour in factories and mines was, in 1844, introduced by Sir James Graham ; and it included a clause with regard to the imposition of a rate for education, and of the attendance of children at Church, unless exemption was claimed on the ground of conscientious dissent. Nonconformists opposed this measure, and the Church of England did not cordially support it ; consequently it was abandoned, the author feeling that, unless generally accepted, it would engender strife and do more harm than good.

A very great excitement prevailed in 1847 amongst advanced voluntaries touching education. The source whence it sprang is correctly specified in the report of the committee of Dissenting deputies for that year. Resolutions passed at a special meeting, after stating that Protestant Dissenters were well known to be friends of education, and that all parties at the time were exerting themselves to the utmost, went on to say that the minutes of Privy Council indicated a scheme which would extinguish voluntary efforts and

be injurious to Sunday schools. They also objected to the authority assumed by the committee of Privy Council.

In connexion with this resistance to Government measures, Dissenters strenuously engaged in renewed efforts for promoting voluntary education, and had, as early as 1843, established on their own principles a Congregational Board of Education. It is curious to find, at an early stage in the controversy, Dr. Hook, of Leeds, expressing himself as follows: "We must offer to the country the best possible education, or the State will take the duty of education upon itself; and if the State does this, it must eventually adopt a purely secular education."¹ "My advice is to find from all parties what concessions can be made without sacrifice of principle. . . . I propose a measure, which is this: that a board of education be formed in every parish—the incumbent chairman, his curates *ex-officio* members, and a certain number of ratepayers to complete the board. If pressed, I would concede that Dissenting ministers resident in the parish three years should also be members. The board to have power to levy a rate and to decide on the books to be used. No direct religious instruction to be given; but no child to be admitted who cannot bring a certificate of being a member of some Sunday-school where religious instruction is given. . . . Each clergyman and Dissenting minister to be permitted to attend on Fridays to instruct his own children."² Dr. Hook examined the question from

¹ *Life of Hook*, p. 264.

² *Ibid.*, p. 262.

a very different point of view from that occupied by extreme voluntaries, and yet in these remarkable sentences he came to a practical result, coincident with the basis of secular education. High Church views led him to a conclusion resembling that which has since been reached by men the very opposite of High Churchmen. But, as intimated already in this notice of the education question, there were Dissenters who held that religion ought to be included in a general system of education, and that a properly limited system of government inspection—one that inquired into the secular instruction given, and *nothing else*—need not touch nonconformist scruples as to accepting Government aid.

Besides legislating for elementary education, some members of the Government endeavoured to effect what had been wished for during the previous century; namely, opening the universities to all classes. Oxford and Cambridge were not in the same position, since at Oxford Nonconformists were excluded both from studies and degrees; but at Cambridge they were eligible for the first, though not for the second. Petitions from numerous distinguished members of the senate in the last-named university urged that exclusion from degrees should terminate; but a petition, more numerously signed by others less known, urged the contrary. A bill was introduced in April, 1834, to open the universities, on the ground that a common school of learning would break down prejudices, that it would be more likely to benefit the Church than the contrary, and that it would not interfere with college discipline. On the other hand,

it was contended that discord would be introduced, that the universities were for teaching the doctrines of the Church, and that Dissenters could, if they pleased, establish colleges of their own. The bill passed the Commons, but in the Lords, being opposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Exeter, the Duke of Wellington, and others, it was thrown out by a large majority. Not until of late was the measure accomplished, and the results obtained have amply justified the change.

It was not long after legislation had touched religion by establishing an educational board, that religion appeared touching the sphere of legislation upon a question of political economy. The principles of free trade, theoretically maintained by Adam Smith, entered the domain of practical politics before the accession of Queen Victoria, and ultimately secured the abolition of the corn laws in 1846. Before that consummation, the Anti-corn Law League had been at work, and had contributed largely to overthrow the monopoly. As early as 1841, a famous conference of ministers at Manchester was held to promote the establishment of free trade in corn. Here it was that English religion entered the circle of commercial affairs. A sentiment had been growing in the country to the effect, that religion has to do with temporal matters, that it ought to make a decided stand on the side of justice and generosity, and leaven the poor man's bread with a spirit of benevolence. The humbler classes were suffering from the high price of necessaries; and it was felt by certain ministers to be a Christian duty

to aid in removing the hardship, and placing the poor in a better position. The conference originated in a meeting at Manchester, and eventually a large number, belonging to different denominations, assembled in the same place to discuss the question. Different opinions were entertained as to the expediency of holding a conference, and as to some points in the mode of conducting it. A prevalent desire was felt to make it as religious as possible, and hence it was proposed that meetings each day should begin with prayer. How this could be accomplished was the difficulty. There were Catholic priests and Protestant clergymen of various descriptions present. The repetition of the Lord's Prayer was suggested, but not adopted. At last the Congregationalists determined to have a meeting for intercession among themselves.

When Mr. Cobden had in a characteristic speech introduced the subject of repealing the corn laws, an evening assembly was held to receive reports of the condition of the poor. "I never attended a more affecting meeting," says one who had not been anxious for the Conference at first. "The speakers kept strictly to the point; there was a feeling of deep sympathy for the poor, and all political allusion was carefully avoided." When reference was made to the existing Government and a prospective one, "although the meeting consisted, I suppose, exclusively of Liberals, the people cried, 'No politics.'"¹

¹ Dr. Halley's letter in Waddington's *Congregational History*, 1800-50, p. 561.

At another meeting a Catholic priest said he recognised all engaged in so charitable a work "as true apostolic clergymen," at which compliment the brethren were transported with joy, and waved their hats with loud huzzas. "Of the meeting, I must say it was managed with amazing tact, skill, energy, and power." "The thing never came to a conference at all, but only a convocation. There was no discussion; the committee took care to provide resolutions, and then to receive information."

It was believed at the time that this conference accelerated the results afterwards reached. Religious enthusiasm has always been found an efficient ally in the advancement of philanthropic purposes, of which a striking instance had occurred a few years before in the abolition of Colonial slavery. I may add, that in other ways the activity of ministers of religion promoted the abolition of the corn laws. I have been credibly informed that with one of the numerous deputations who waited upon Sir Robert Peel there was united a singularly shrewd and zealous dissenting minister from Scotland, who brought certain points under the great minister's notice in such a way as powerfully to impress his mind. Rumours, I am aware, are often current, without anything like adequate authority; but in this case I received good evidence for the incident I have related, and it was confirmed by the minister himself, with whom I conversed on the subject many years ago.

It is impossible to pass over the years 1848 and 1849 without thinking of political events which then

occurred in England and the continent, when the preservation of order, mainly the consequence of English habits based on prevalent religious convictions, presented a striking contrast to what occurred on the other side the water. I well remember scenes of confusion which I witnessed or heard of when descending the Rhine at that time. Troops were on the move, prisoners were met with on steamboats, and stories were told of sieges, conflagrations, and battles which had occurred in the neighbourhood. A godless spirit exasperated conflicts carried on in the cause of a false kind of liberty. Infidelity was at the bottom of many a watchword, which sounded so sacred because it spoke of liberty. Politics uncurbed by faith in a Divine Ruler of the world, whose perfect law lies at the foundation of all true patriotic action and all true social order, ran riot, kindling flames and shedding blood. But thank God that lawlessness and violence were kept in check at home by the direct and indirect influence of religion ! for, whilst it wrought immediately on the minds of many, it touched the minds of more by early example and education. Nobody can forget the Sunday which preceded April 10th, 1848, when chartism was rampant, and London citizens were alarmed at the meeting on Kennington Common, projected by Fergus O'Connor. The effect of Divine worship that morning was very great, when an aged friend who remembered the French Revolution, spoke from my pulpit of the strength and comfort which were then felt in England by godly people who trusted in an over-ruling providence ; political agitations had

before been soothed by trust in the Most High. So it was now in 1848.

A strong conviction widely prevailed, that human society is much more than a haphazard aggregate of men and women, much more even than a compact, however originated and developed, between individuals according to divisions of race. Christians saw in the conditions of human existence something Divine beyond what Plato dreamt of in his republic. They believed in the Old Testament story of nations, and in New Testament principles applicable to human life in all forms and circumstances. They were sure of the necessity of religion for the well-being of mankind, that infidelity is immoral, and that a conviction of Jesus Christ being "King of kings and Lord of lords" lies at the root of political wisdom.

Happily, while France and Germany were rocked from end to end by social earthquakes, and one throne after another and one constitution after another fell to the ground, England stood steady amidst the commotion. Queen and realm, with slight disturbance, passed through the storm; and a facetious foreigner, with an amusing surprise, exclaimed, "There is no revolution in England, but the revolution of *le père Gorham*."

The Gorham controversy, as it is called, was then going on. It did not relate to legislative interference with religion, or to religious influence on politics, like the cases just described, but to the decision of a theological controversy by courts of judicature. It was not a complexity between Parliament and religion, but between law and religion. With all its

attendant circumstances, and with the ultimate legal decision, it was really a revolution for the English Church, as the French said, after all.

In evangelical circles it involved a question of practical interest far beyond what at first sight would appear. It related to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, as held by Anglo-Catholics; and if that doctrine had been pronounced to be the authoritative *standard of belief* for all clergymen, Evangelicals would have felt their position in the Establishment no longer tenable. Curtains have been uplifted, revealing anxiety in many incumbencies and curacies, akin to what obtained in Scotch manses when disruption was impending. "The crisis," said an eminent clergyman, "was very grave, and all the graver because evangelical people in the Church of England were—a rope of sand."¹

George Cornelius Gorham, Vicar of St. Just, in Cornwall, received from the Lord Chancellor a presentation to the living of Bramford Speke, both in the diocese of Exeter. Dr. Phillpotts, the bishop, a High Churchman, with pronounced views of sacraments, required this clergyman, who was a Low Churchman, to pass through an examination extending, it is said, to 149 inquiries. The ordeal lasted no less than six days, and at the end the bishop expressed dissatisfaction with an answer respecting baptism, to the effect that regeneration was connected

¹ *Memoir of Henry Venn*, p. 256. Mr. Venn thought that baptism only represented regeneration, as bread represented the body of Christ, p. 257.

with it not *absolutely* but *conditionally*. The bishop declined to induct him ; and he, believing such refusal was illegal, commenced proceedings to compel the induction. The difference between the two, seemingly trivial to many, raised the inquiry, Is baptism really the means of salvation ? Are the baptized saved through baptism ? and are the unbaptized lost without it ? Or, in other words, does regeneration follow the baptismal rite, or depend on the recipient's state of mind afterwards ? The bishop and Mr. Gorham were equally decided, each seeing that they were separated from each other by a gulf, which if not wide was deep. The bishop appealed to the baptismal service and the catechism, insisting that their grammatical meaning did not countenance the presbyter's opinion. The presbyter appealed to the articles and formularies of the Prayer Book as a whole, and contended for his own views on that wider ground. The prelate attached great significance and authority to the writings of the Fathers, from which numerous passages could be cited in opposition to the view of the incumbent. The latter belonged to a class who held patristic doctrine in light esteem, and built their faith on Holy Writ, with which however they endeavoured to reconcile the words of Common Prayer. So the matter stood. To decide it judgment was sought from courts of law. After passing through certain stages, not needing to be described here, the case was tried in the Dean of Arches court, and that court decided in 1849 that baptismal regeneration is the doctrine of the Church of England, that

Gorham's view did not come up to the teaching of the Prayer Book, and that therefore the diocesan's refusal was justifiable, and the appeal must be dismissed with costs. This was regarded as a High Church victory, and gave Oxford Tractarians great satisfaction. Dr. Pusey, in his elaborate tract, No. LXVII., on baptism, had presented what was deemed by those who agreed with him an exhaustive treatment of the subject. He had throughout upheld the efficacy of the rite; the Oxford school therefore exulted in the decision. But Gorham would not allow the case to rest. He appealed to the judicial committee of Privy Council, consisting of great legal functionaries, together with the two archbishops, Sumner and Musgrave, and Blomfield, Bishop of London. The decision of this court was in favour of Gorham; Vice-Chancellor Knight Bruce and Bishop Blomfield differing from the other members. The form of decision requires careful notice. The court said it was not their province to determine matters of faith, or to show what ought to be the doctrine of the Church, but simply to consider what is the law in relation to the question brought before them. They then decided that different opinions as to baptism were held by the reformers; that differences of opinion on points left open were always considered to be consistent with subscription to the articles and consent to the formularies; and that opinions, in no important particular distinguishable from Gorham's, had been maintained without censure by many eminent prelates and divines. The court declined to express any opinion as to the accuracy or otherwise of the appellant's

views, but decided that the judgment of the Court of Arches should be reversed.¹

The delivery of this judgment was an exciting incident. "The various emotions depicted upon the countenances," says the evangelical Henry Venn, "reminded me of Raphael's cartoon of Paul preaching at Athens. My own mind was in a kind of trance at hearing such sound and Protestant sentiments propounded by the highest judicial authority of the kingdom. The judgment was a more decided and complete vindication of the liberty of our Church than I had dared to hope for. At the conclusion, the shouts, evidently involuntary, ejaculations of bravo from many a beaming countenance, the start which it occasioned to the Lords of the Council, and the eager hush of the officers, gave it a ludicrous turn."²

The deliverance was important, as it gave a legal standing in the Church to those who, like Mr. Gorham, held views denounced by the Tractarian party, but it did no more. They considered Tractarianism was inconsistent with clerical office in the Church of England, but the decision left Tractarianism as it was. The upholders of Tractarianism considered that their opponents denied Church doctrines, and had no business to remain amongst the shepherds of the fold. But the decision kept them inside. By it they were bound to keep the peace with one another. Such a decision, unpalatable in itself to High

¹ Broderick and Freemantle's *Judgment of the Privy Council*, pp. 80-107.

² *Memoir of the Rev. Henry Venn*, p. 117.

Churchmen, was further vitiated in their esteem, by the constitution of the court whence it emanated. It was a secular, not a spiritual tribunal. It was Erastian rule, contrary to Anglo-Catholic principles ; but the Bishop of Exeter would have been glad to get the decision reversed, even by Erastian judges, and for that purpose applied to the Queen's Bench, the Exchequer and Common Pleas, all however in vain.

His lordship plunged into a controversy with Archbishop Sumner, whom he addressed in a letter, complaining that he had departed from High Church views once held by him. The archbishop was too low a Churchman to please some of his brethren. "It was a time of terrible party spirit," writes one who knew him, "and his opinions were too pronounced to be acceptable to all. 'Why not call the bishops around you in this quiet place?' (Addington,) the writer suggested to the Primate, 'and so come to a general agreement.' 'What is the use?' was the reply. 'We meet and part, and the divergency is greater than before.'"¹ Dr. Phillpotts could not agree with Dr. Sumner, so he plunged into print, and took his superior to task. His was only one amongst a crowd of publications which kept the dispute alive after the manner of the Bangor contest, and others in days of yore. As was to be expected, literature on the subject was confined chiefly to Church circles, but one clever nonconformist critic took up his pen and reviewed the proceedings from his own point of view.²

¹ *Clerical Reminiscences*, p. 165.

² *The Gorham Case*. By T. Binney.

CHAPTER X.

TRACTARIANISM AND RITUALISM.

1837-50.

THE tracts commenced in 1833, and continued till 1841. They did not at first "excite any great interest." Anonymous publications rarely do. But in 1834 Newman sent forth his *Parochial Sermons*, and they created an immense stir. Sermons are often a dead weight on booksellers' shelves. These sold like "Waverley novels," and helped on the Oxford movement. The *British Magazine*, edited by Rose and supported by Newman, gave an additional impetus. During the period just specified other publications, upholding Anglo-Catholic principles, issued from the press. Newman's *Prophetic Office of the Church viewed relatively to Romanism and Protestantism*, appeared in 1836. The spirit of the volume is not so gentle to the Church of Rome as Tract LXXI., published the year before; on the contrary, it is very fierce. The subject on the whole is the *via media*, the middle path between Protestantism and Popery. In 1837 came forth *The Essay on Justification*, by the same author, aimed at the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone. In 1838 appeared the first volume of a "Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, anterior to the Division of the East

and West." The prospectus did not state what works were to be included, beyond a reference to St. Chrysostom, whose writings belong to a date later than is generally understood when we speak of the primitive age; and the most important reason for publishing the series was stated to be "the circumstance that the Anglican branch of the Church catholic is founded upon Holy Scripture and the agreement of the universal Church; and that therefore the knowledge of Christian antiquity is necessary in order to understand and maintain her doctrines, and especially her creeds and liturgy." The editors were announced as the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D., the Rev. John Keble, M.A., the Rev. J. H. Newman, B.D., and the Rev. C. Marriott, M.A. The series started with *The Confessions of Augustine*, an experimental rather than a controversial treatise, and it was revised from a former translation by Dr. Pusey. In the preface he cited the canon of 1571: "The clergy shall be careful never to teach anything from the pulpit, to be religiously held and believed by the people, but what is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, and collected out of that same doctrine by the catholic Fathers and ancient bishops." This was explained to mean "no semblance of contrasting Scripture and the Fathers as co-ordinate authority. Scripture is revealed as paramount. The doctrine of the Old and New Testament is the source, the catholic Fathers and ancient bishops have but the office of collecting out of that same doctrine." "The contrast then, in point of authority, is not between Holy Scripture and the

Fathers, but between the Fathers and us." This cautious and ingenious statement placed the Fathers before the modern Church as authoritative interpreters whom people should follow, renouncing the right of private judgment. The Fathers were witnesses of Christ's last will and testament, and having received special instructions on the subject were therefore proper expounders of what that will and testament means. This illustration is found in the preface. It was very significant that the editor began with the fifth, not the first and second centuries ; with Athanasius and Augustine, not with the apostolic fathers, who had been unannounced. Justin Martyr is also omitted in the prospectus, and only came in last as the fortieth volume. The writers of the first two centuries are left out, except Tertullian, who lived at the close of the second,¹ and whose teaching influenced Cyprian, and contributed largely to the ascetic innovations which laid the bases of mediæval doctrine and practice. The publications indicated the basis of the whole movement. It was a distinct return to the principle of Church authority and the overthrow of the right of private judgment. "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants," had been the motto of many in the Church, as out of it ; now the Oxford divines were bent on teaching that the early Fathers are to be followed as the true interpretation of Holy Writ.

How far the enterprise helped on the Anglo-

¹ This is noticed in a pamphlet entitled *The Rubrical Question of 1874.*

Catholic movement I am unable to say. About the time that the tracts ceased, and when the Library had proceeded as far as the seventh volume, containing Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Romans*, the "Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology," was commenced with Bishop Andrew's Sermons, Archbishop Bramhall's works, and Bishop Bull's *Harmony of St. Paul and St. James on Justification*. These authors, and the rest which followed, had been copiously used in the catena supplied by the tracts. The harmony of the whole design, had it not been avowed, was sufficiently apparent.

The publication of No. XC. in 1841 was the crisis in this history.¹ "Of that celebrated document it will suffice to remind the reader that it was an attempt to pacify the minds of those who fancied that in the Thirty-nine Articles our Church was committed to a serious, if not fatal departure, from some of the doctrines of the primitive catholic Church, and that consequently they were the most formidable flaw in the claim of our Church to be considered a true branch of the catholic Church." So speaks one who sympathises to some extent in the movement. It was far differently judged when looked at from a Protestant point of view. Even one of the original subscribers to the Tracts pronounced it an attack on the Thirty-nine Articles, full of new and strange doctrines, and stated that the author found it as much as he could do to prevent his disciples straggling in the direction of Rome.²

¹ *Apologia*, p. 141.

² *New and Strange Doctrines*, a letter to Dr. Hook, p. 26. In

Four Oxford tutors, including the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Tait, took up the subject, and wrote to the editor, saying, that in their apprehension, the last had "a highly dangerous tendency from its suggesting that certain very important errors of the Church of Rome are not condemned by the articles of the Church of England ;" for instance, that those articles do not contain any condemnation of the doctrines of purgatory, pardons, adoration of images and relics, the invocation of saints, and the mass, as they are taught by the Church of Rome. The tutors called for the name of the author, and in a few days Newman avowed himself. The Hebdomadal Board, on March 15th, pronounced the modes of interpreting the Thirty-nine Articles suggested in the said tract inconsistent with the due observance of the university statutes. Newman, at the request of his bishop, Dr. Bagot, withdrew the tract, but he resigned his living. In 1844 Ward, of Baliol, published his *Ideal of a Christian Church*, and suggested that the articles should be interpreted in an "unnatural sense," so as to bring them into harmony with the Trentine decrees.

The excitement which had begun before reached its highest pitch after the publication of No. XC. "In

the life of F. D. Maurice reference is made to a letter by Father Newman, written February 26th, 1863, showing "that the contention of Tract XC. had been that Protestants, having framed the Articles in a sense which would not frighten the Romanists of their day, whom they could not afford to offend, it was legitimate for those who now held Romanist doctrine to take the articles in a sense which would cover their views."

every part of the country and every class in society, through every organ and occasion of opinion, in newspapers, in periodicals, at meetings, in pulpits, at dinner tables, in coffee rooms, in railway carriages," says Newman in his *Apologia*, "I was denounced as a traitor, who had laid his train and was detected in the very act of firing it against the time-honoured Establishment."¹ An amusing anecdote went the round. A certain bishop, anxious to see the notorious tract, wrote to his London bookseller to send it down. Not free from an infirmity common to prelates and others, he did not write *No. 90* so legibly as to be easily read. The bookseller wrote back that he could not hear of any pamphlet with the title "*No go.*" It was an easy witticism to give the tract that name.

Pamphlets and books innumerable flowed from the press, some in defence, more in opposition. No wonder Protestants, who gloried in the Reformation, attacked a party standing midway between themselves and the Romish camp, animated by the loftiest clerical pretensions, exerting a widespread power—"like an infection of the air, breathed upon those who in some other respects feel called upon to resist it"—a party that was extensively leavening the Church with its principles, meeting people at their doors, and manifestly preparing many a clergyman for secession to Rome. But the attack was, in many instances, passionate and indiscriminating, often attributing to all Tractarians the worst motives, and

¹ *Apologia*, p. 173.

sadly wanting in the Christian graces of candour and charity. It was not surprising, in a country like ours, where bitter memories of Popery had been handed down from the sixteenth century, that intense anxiety and indignation should be felt when the clergymen of a Protestant Church were either hastening back to a communion from which their fathers had separated themselves at the cost of life, or were levelling a road by which others were likely to return. Yet in all cases of controversy the ethics of St. Paul in the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians ought to be kept in remembrance. The periodical press, reviews, magazines, and newspapers contained, amidst some laudable examples of a different temper, many lamentable breaches of Christian duty as to charity and justice.

What was the attitude assumed by the bishops at that time? A member of convocation, writing to the *Standard*, March 24th, 1841, in reference to No. XC., stated that "letters have been received from the Bishops of London (Blomfield), Winchester (Sumner), Chester (J. B. Sumner), Chichester (Shuttleworth), and Ripon (Longley), strongly condemning the tract in question, independently of the more general censures by the Bishops of Exeter (Phillpotts) and Calcutta (Wilson)." The Bishop of Oxford (Bagot), Newman's diocesan, advised, as we have seen, the suppression of the offensive publication. Afterwards he condemned Newman's method of interpretation as "making the articles mean anything or nothing." Yet Newman says of Bagot: "I was rewarded by having, all my time, for ecclesiastical

superior a man whom, had I had a choice, I should have preferred, out and out, to any other bishop on the bench, and for whose memory I have a special affection. . . . He ever sympathized with me in my trials. . . . May his name ever be blessed."¹ These statements however relate to the treatment of that one pamphlet; generally, in reference to the movement, the two Sumners, one at Winchester, the other at Chester, were decidedly opposed. Stanley, consecrated Bishop of Norwich in 1837, in a charge delivered some time afterwards, condemned, not only the late extravagances of that party, but "the very fountain head whence they originally flowed—the doctrine of apostolical succession." He disavowed that doctrine in a sermon before his brother bishops; and at a civic banquet afterwards, the Lord Mayor thanked the preacher "for the boldest sermon ever delivered in St. Paul's Cathedral."² Ryder, Bishop of Lichfield, who died in 1836, was a thorough Evangelical, and therefore utterly opposed to the tracts from the beginning; and Dr. Longley, the first occupant of the restored see of Ripon, in 1836, unmistakably manifested his disagreement with the main principles of the Oxford divines.³ Blomfield, who became Bishop of London in 1828, was thought to "halt between two opinions," maintaining High Church principles to some extent, yet shocked at excesses into which Tractarians rushed. He found

¹ *Apologia*, p. 123.

² *Memoirs of Edward and Catherine Stanley*, p. 68.

³ *Hook's Life*, p. 321.

himself in a difficult position, and had to stand between cross fires; but in 1842 he distinctly condemned the mode of interpreting the articles adopted in No. XC. Phillpotts, appointed to Exeter in 1831, was perhaps the highest Churchman on the bench. Howley, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1828—"the last of the old *régime*, the last who drove to confirmation in a carriage and four," the last with his twenty footmen in purple liveries waiting at table—was a quiet, peaceable man, adverse to controversy. One who afterwards became Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Whately, condemned the movement in unmistakable terms, saying, after he had depicted the course taken by the Oxford divines: "It was no wonder that many of those who had thus been brought on to the very brink of Romanism should, when they became aware of their real position, pass on. But much as their case is to be lamented, and great as the damage is which they have done to our Church, *they* are not the members of the party that are most to be feared. They have left us and become *avowed* Romanists, and by that very act have set us on our guard against them."¹ "From the end of 1841," says Dr. Newman, "I was on my death-bed, as regards my membership with the Anglican Church, though at the time I became aware of it only by degrees." This may seem surprising, yet, as intimated already, it requires no large acquaintance with history and human nature to understand how unconsciously a man may be travelling in a direction visible enough

¹ *Cautions for the Times*, pp. 163-165.

to everybody but himself. Five years elapsed between the cessation of the tracts and Newman's profession of Romanism. A gifted lady, as he tells us in his *Apologia*, said, "He did not take the leap at once, but quietly sat down on the top of the fence, with his feet hanging towards the road, as if he meant to take his time about it and let himself down easily."¹ Whilst he was sitting on that fence, the volume of the "Library of the Fathers" containing Newman's edition of Athanasius' *Four Orations* was published in 1841. In 1845 he determined to write "an essay on doctrinal development," saying, "If, at the end of it, my convictions in favour of the Roman Church are not weaker, I will make up my mind to seek admission into her fold." He mapped out the road as he drove along, and his doctrinal development brought him, at the beginning of 1846, to the gates of the Vatican. Few autobiographical passages can be compared with the following in its touching interest: "I left Oxford for good on Monday, February 23rd, 1846." "I slept on Sunday night at the Observatory. On the morning of the 23rd I left the Observatory." "I have never seen Oxford since, excepting its spires, as they are seen from the railway." This was written in 1864.

Froude did not live long enough to take the grand transitional step. The number who did so was very large, but it is not easy to bring together statistics bearing on the question. The result would not be worth the trouble of reaching it. Certain names

¹ *Apologia*, p. 348.

stand out prominently beyond the rest. William George Ward, as we have seen, published, in 1844, *The Ideal of a Christian Church*; the book was condemned in Convocation, and the author was degraded. In 1850 appeared another volume on *The Anglican Establishment in Contrast with the Church Catholic*. This showed that he was no longer a member of the Establishment, and had entered the Church of Rome. Dr., now Cardinal Newman, had really seceded from the Church of England in 1845, and after entering into the Roman communion was appointed head of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, at Birmingham. Dr. Manning, who at the time was Archdeacon of Chichester, and had not long before published a volume of remarkable sermons preached before the University of Oxford, resigned his preferments in 1851; and in 1857 founded a congregation at Bayswater, called Oblates of St. Charles Borromeo. Before the secession of Dr., now Cardinal Manning, Frederick William Faber, a clergyman of the Church of England, had become a priest of the Oratory.

These men and others were charged with dishonesty, with having fixed their eye upon Rome, as the goal of their race, long before they reached it, veiling their designs under specious pretensions. No one who reads the *Apologia* can believe this—at least with regard to Newman and his friends. The question then may be asked, How is it that persons nurtured in Protestantism can sincerely and uprightly enter the Roman Catholic communion? I am accustomed to look at the matter thus. They com-

press into a few years the history of a few centuries. They epitomize in their own experience the ages of innovation and development. The Oxford converts did not take a leap all at once. For ten years and more they were educating themselves up to a point, which they did not see at first, any more than the Church of the third and fourth centuries saw what it was to become in the thirteenth. Yet one step logically led to another. Inference after inference came forward, beckoning them on, and they followed "by a way they knew not." Roman Catholic converts are not made by arguments in detail respecting this doctrine and that; they do not adopt the idea of purgatory or transubstantiation by itself, but they imbibe the notion of one holy, indivisible, catholic, organized Church: that notion develops itself into the whole system of Romish dogmas.¹ Persons undergoing the change enter into

¹ This point receives illustration from the following passage in the *Apologia*, p. 197. "These then were the parties in the controversy—the Anglican *via media* and the popular religion of Rome. And next as to the issue to which the controversy between them was brought, it was this;—the Anglican disputant took his stand upon antiquity or apostolicity, the Roman upon catholicity. The Anglican said to the Roman, 'There is but one faith, the ancient, and you have not kept to it.' The Roman retorted, 'There is but one Church, the catholic, and you are out of it.' The Anglican urged, 'Your special beliefs, practices, modes of action are nowhere in antiquity.' The Roman objected, 'You do not communicate with any one Church besides your own and its offshoots, and you have discarded principles, doctrines, sacraments, and usages which are and ever have been received in the east and the west.' The true Church as defined in the creeds was both catholic and apostolic; now as I viewed the

a certain atmosphere, catch a certain tone, form a certain taste, and so proceed, by insensible gradations, to a point not foreseen at the beginning. A sort of spell comes over them. It may be aided by constitutional tendencies, by sensibility, by imagination, by reverence for antiquity, by the influence of great names and historical associations. They become priestly, sacramental, and catholic in the Cyprianic sense ; they glide on till they become priestly, sacramental, and catholic in the mediæval sense. Why should not tendencies in an individual work as tendencies have done in society ? No thoughtful student of Church history can wonder at the Oxford conversions. Students, patristically devout, followed Chrysostom and Ambrose and Jerome, and then were handed over by these good Fathers to Gregory the Great, afterwards they have been conducted onwards to the Second Council of Nicæa. And who can consistently stop there ? The way is open and the impulse is irresistible to seek rest amidst Lateran decrees and under the shadow of Innocent's high throne. I am perfectly aware that the Nicene Churchman was not Papistical, and that the tractarian Churchman is not Romanist ; but in both may be discovered such catholicism as leads to Romanism and Popery. There is nothing very mysterious in the philosophy of this kind of change,

controversy in which I was engaged, England and Rome had divided these notes or perogatives between them ; the cause lay thus, Apostolicity *versus* Catholicity." This was, in Newman's estimation, the gist of the controversy. See also p. 210.

when men take the Fathers as their authority, confound the actual with the ideal, and read the Bible through the gloss of Church traditions. Some ten years of Oxford Church history, and some eight centuries of general Church history, pretty well explain each other.

There are moods of mind in which logic, however cleverly cut and sharply pointed, proves powerless. Puritans think they can convince Catholics by inferences drawn from Scripture and by quotations culled from Fathers. The result is disappointing. The fact is, in many cases, perhaps in most, sensibilities and predilections are far more potent than reasonings. People are found in a certain state of feeling ; they have become accustomed to breathe a sentimental air, which will not admit the entrance of conclusions natural to those of a different temperament. Mental idiosyncrasies come into play. The differences between minds and minds make a wonderful difference in the beliefs which are cherished ; and this undeniable fact is too little considered in schemes of philosophy and in histories of opinion. And here I may add that many young people at the time came under the inspiration of certain clergymen who, consciously or insensibly, were on the way to Rome. Personal attachment mingled with other factors of opinion, and clinging to the garments of chosen instructors, they found themselves over the border, and within the precincts of the Roman communion, before they were aware. I speak from personal acquaintance with a young friend, who seeking rest in the Church, travelled from "Oxford

to Rome," and who informed the world "how it fared with one who took the journey."

Keble and Pusey remained in the Church of England. In 1846 Keble published his *Lyra Innocentium*,¹ tuned to the notes of Anglo-Catholic music. His opposition to the opening of Oxford is seen in *Plain Thoughts on the Proposed Addition of Dissenters to the University* (1854); and later on he published a life of Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man, showing his strong sympathy with the character of that Anglo-Catholic prelate. His Oxford professorship of poetry, "the only purely secular function which he was called to perform," was marked by lectures "buried in the tomb of a dead language," and he won grateful remembrance from a successful competitor for the Newdegate prize afterwards. "He recalled, after the lapse of more than thirty years, the quiet kindness of manner, the bright, twinkling eye illuminating that otherwise inexpressive countenance, which greeted the bashful student on his entrance into the professor's presence."² Beyond his Oxford professorship Keble lived a retired pastoral life, and a narrow ecclesiastical one,³ always breathing an Anglo-Catholic atmosphere; and the line which separated him from Rome looks so narrow that one wonders he did not cross it. It would be hard perhaps to reconcile with his unbending theory of High Churchism these lines of his, so full of spiritual charm :

¹ Stanley's *Essays on Church and State*, p. 598.

² *Ibid.*, p. 600.

“‘ Lord, and what shall this man do ? ’
Ask’st thou, Christian, for thy friend ?
If his love for Christ be true,
Christ has told thee of his end :
This is he whom God approves ;
This is he whom Jesus loves.”

The Anglo-Catholic poet here opens a door which the Anglo-Catholic divine had seemed to shut. Happy inconsistency !¹

Dr. Pusey remained in the Church of England, notwithstanding his suspension for alleged theological errors in 1843. His treatise on *Baptismal Regeneration* I have noticed ; and in harmony with the high sacramental views there propounded is the doctrine of the eucharist preached in the censured sermon, and published also in a work entitled, *The Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ, the Doctrine of the English Church* (1857). He sent into the world a large number of works controversial and expository —the latter abounding in interesting quotations from Church literature, and in reflections, often mystical, but not very helpful to those who wish to ascertain the original thoughts of the sacred writers. Dr. Pusey’s account of his own position was, that he did not

¹ Mr. Percival Bunting, in a biographical introduction to the memorials of his brother, the Rev. W. M. Bunting (p. 36), tells us : “ I heard what I believe was the last sermon of John Keble. The usual morning service was read. Just before the commencement of the litany, the pale old man rose from his knees, faced his people, and said, ‘ The prayers of the congregation are desired for the distressed Church, and especially for the distressed Church in New Zealand and South Africa, and for Mary Ann Smallwood.’ Then we renewed our devotions.”

accept the leadership of a party, that his name was misused for this purpose, and that he professed to be nothing more than a follower of the Fathers, ancient and Anglo-Catholic. He was separated widely in ecclesiastical beliefs from the evangelical section of the Church, but he says in his *Eirenicon* (p. 4) :—

“Ever since I knew them (which was not in my earliest years) I have loved those who are called ‘Evangelicals,’ I have loved them, because they loved our Lord. I loved them for their zeal for souls. I often thought them narrow, yet I was often drawn to individuals among them more than to others who held truths in common with myself, which the Evangelicals did not hold, at least explicitly. I believed them to be ‘of the truth.’ I have ever believed and believe, that their faith was and is, on some points of doctrine, much truer than their words. I believed and believe, that they are often withheld from the clear and full sight of the truth by an inveterate prejudice, that that truth, as held by us, is united with error, or with indistinct acknowledgment of other truths which they themselves hold sacred. Whilst then I lived in society, I ever sought them out, both out of love for themselves, and because I believed that nothing (with God’s help) so dispels untrue prejudice as personal intercourse, heart to heart, with those against whom that prejudice is entertained. I sought to point out to them our common basis of faith. I never met with any who held the Lutheran doctrine of justification, that ‘justifying faith is that whereby a person believes himself to be justified.’ To others, who were not Calvinists, I used to say, ‘I believe all which you believe; we only part, where you deny.’ I formed some lasting friendships with some among them who have finished their course, and with others who still remain. When occasion came, as in some of our struggles at Oxford, we acted together.”

On the sandstone forest ridge of Sussex, near Grinstead church, stands Sackville College, one of those old foundations which provide for a number of poor people and have placed at their head a Warden, whose duties leave ample time for researches neglected by students in general. For many years the Sackville Wardenship was held by an eminent scholar, who may be fitly classed with the distinguished names just noticed. Dr. John Mason Neale was a Churchman of the highest type, adverse to religious fellowship with Dissenters, but craving for communion with foreign branches of ancient Christendom. He differed, however, from Oxford Anglo-Catholics in this respect that his sympathies ran more towards the east than the west, more towards the Greek Church than toward the Roman. The toil which he expended upon oriental ecclesiasticism was immense. He published a *History of the Patriarchate of Alexandria* in 1847, tracing the recondite story from the time of St. Mark down to the days of Cyril Lucar, through a labyrinth of controversies and divisions; and to this he added, in 1850, an elaborate introduction bearing on the geography, the ecclesiology, the liturgies, the calendars, and the office books of "the Holy Eastern Church." Buried amidst his books and MSS. in Sackville College, he spent precious hours in arduous researches assisted by other scholars, English and Foreign, Russian and Syriac. One of his helpers, who was in full ecclesiastical accord with him—the Rev. George Williams, Vicar of Ringwood—edited a fragment which Dr. Neale left on the Patriarchate of Antioch. Mr.

Williams had been fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and for a time he resided at Jerusalem, not at all approving of the arrangement for a Lutheran clergyman in Anglo-episcopal orders, and deplored "the aggressive policy adopted towards the Christian communities," which "served to justify the worst suspicions of their ecclesiastics, and to bring on the Anglican Church an imputation of dishonesty."¹ For Greek and Armenian bishops he had great respect, and was one of those who longed for full communion with them and their Churches. In his preface to Neale's posthumous work he speaks of him "as not permitted to see the consummation of his ardent desires ; yet his latter years were gladdened by the unmistakable evidences of a wider and constantly increasing interest, both at home and abroad, in the cause of a reunited Christendom, which had been for many years the day-dream of a small and uninfluential section of Anglican Churchmen."² To that section, Mr. Williams belonged. In connexion with this movement, Dr. Neale, and I believe Mr. Williams too, felt an interest in the Jansenist Church of Holland ; and the former published a history of it in 1858. Dr. Neale was a writer of poetry and of fiction, and issued a number of tales in the service of Anglo-catholicism. He also ventured on an edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, so travestied that the great dreamer would not have recognised in it much resemblance to his own dream.

¹ Williams' *Holy City*, vol. ii. p. 500.

² *The Patriarchate of Antioch*, preface by Williams.

The Anglo-Catholic development known by the name of *Ritualism* began to take a decided shape just before the close of the period included within this chapter. A distinction may be made between what is merely an æsthetic revival in forms of worship and Anglo-Catholic Ritualism properly so called. To distinguish between them in thought is easy, but sometimes to distinguish between them in fact is difficult. Where exactly the one runs into the other, it is hard to decide. At all events, Anglo-Catholic Ritualism derives its significance from its being the embodiment of Anglo-Catholic dogmas. Dresses and postures might justly be treated as child's play, apart from symbolical meanings. Insignificant and trifling under one aspect, they become important and mischievous under another.

"In 1844 a row of carriages with powdered footmen and thorough-bred horses might have been seen, at twenty minutes past five in the afternoon, waiting for the conclusion of a service in a dissenting-like looking chapel near Regent Street. The building could not hold quite three hundred people, and it had only a low table with a red altar cloth, railed round in the old-fashioned Low Church way, and on it two unobtrusive candlesticks. There was a small surpliced choir saying prayers from a low desk, and turning their faces away from the congregation; after which the preacher delivered his sermon attired in white, instead of black, then a peculiarity which attracted immense attention. That was the modest commencement of Ritualism in the soon much talked

of chapel in Margaret Street, long since superseded by the costly church built on the spot.”¹

Disturbances followed the introduction of Ritualism. What occurred at St. Paul’s, Knightsbridge, was an early instance ; it was in opposition to nothing more than a choral service and the use of a surplice in preaching. So uncommon had been the latter, that the sight of it aroused the neighbourhood. A rood screen with a cross added to the excitement.² Though ritualistic practices, such as afterwards occurred, were not adopted at Knightsbridge, yet the incumbent said in an essay on *Some Results of the Tractarian Movement in 1833*, “The ancient vestments present to crowds of worshippers the fact that here, before God’s altar, is something far higher, far more awful, more mysterious than aught that man can speak of ; namely, the presence of the Son of God in human flesh subsisting.” After 1850 changes in worship were made at Brighton, and lights were placed on the altar ; after 1852, the chasuble, the dalmatica, and the tunicle made their appearance at Frome. The innovations, as far as they had proceeded at that time, led to a protest against them at a meeting in Freemasons’ Tavern, in December, 1850. As late as 1860 the use of the surplice in the pulpit was still deemed such a novelty that a violent uproar on account of it, at the church of St. George’s-in-the-East, became common town talk ; and a story

¹ *Church Thought and Church Work*, 1874, edited by Anderson, p. 193.

² *First Report on Ritual Commission*, 1867, p. 74.

went the round of an old lady exclaiming with ecstasy as she saw the clergyman emerge from the vestry in the old gown, "Thank God ! it is black." Ritualism, not long afterwards, burst into full bloom ; and in the catalogue of the Ecclesiastical Art Exhibition at York, in 1866, the editor exults in the possession of a long list of churches where altar lights and vestments were in use ; but the list he did not deem it prudent to print. The catalogue includes the whole paraphernalia of Roman Catholic worship.

It is often said that the Oxford Tractarians and early Anglo-Catholics did not adopt ritualistic practices ; this is very true, but they prepared for them, and the existence of an elaborate ceremonial, now so familiar in spite of its condemnation by legal authorities, is inconceivable apart from the doctrines taught in 1833.

The origin of Ritualism cannot be denied, nor can the end of it be matter of doubt. It points to the Church of Rome, and its direction is openly defended

"Anglicans," says one of its advocates, "are reproached by Protestants with their resemblance to Romans ; they say a stranger entering into a church where ritual is carefully attended to, might easily mistake it for a Roman service. Of course he might ; the whole purpose of the great revival has been to eliminate the dreary Protestantism of the Hanoverian period, and restore the glory of catholic worship. Our churches are restored after the mediæval pattern, and our ritual must accord with the catholic standard. Our Book of Common Prayer is no Protestant invention ; it is not the creation of the nineteenth century. The eucharist office is only a variety of the western rite.

The altar and its ornaments are nearly the same ; the cations are the same ; the habits and vestments of the priesthood are the same ; the plain song is the same. Is it any wonder they should be mistaken ? ”¹

Dr. Thirlwall, Bishop of St. David’s, did not deal with the errors of the day after the same fashion that Bishop Stanley did. He carefully avoided extremes, and looked at both sides of a question, rebuking ceremonialism on the one hand and latitudinarianism on the other, yet keeping aloof from partisanship in the great controversy of his age. He was greater as a scholar than as a bishop. His fame as historian of Greece eclipses his efficiency as chief pastor of a Welsh diocese. His charming letters, lately published, reveal the variety of his knowledge and the purity of his taste ; but one laments that he did not devote himself to some work of high theological instruction, and that he was not appointed to some more important see, where administrative ability might have had fuller scope. Wisdom was the crowning endowment of his mind, and his charges were models for compositions of that order. Far different from Dr. Thirlwall was Dr. Wilberforce. He was more zealous, more active, more eloquent. With qualities which would have made him a great

¹ *The Church and the World*, p. 212. “ Man, as a wise friend once said to me, is after all an animal that has only a few tricks. . . . We have, in proportion to the number of persons in the United States who belong to the Episcopal or Anglican Church, just as much Puseyism and just as bitter quarrels about it as you have ” (Letter to Miss Edgeworth, March 30th, 1844). *Life of George Ticknor*, vol. ii. p. 219.

mediæval Churchman, his policy in some instances served to promote the evils he would have been glad to check ; a many-sided man, full of sympathy, which flowed in manifold directions, his conduct and conversation were frequently inconsistent, and he could be cited for approving and condemning the same thing. Mischiefs he could have nipped in the bud he allowed to burst into flower. Connivance or faint reproof encouraged consequences which he lived to lament. But he had a tender heart, was the subject of strong affections, and what he could do in the pulpit and on the platform will long be remembered.

Dr. Hampden was far removed from the tractarian and ritualistic party ; but, with the exception of a cautious and carefully balanced essay on *Tradition*, published in 1839, eight years before he became a bishop, he contributed nothing to the Oxford controversy. His nomination to a bishopric, after the disturbance created by his Bampton Lecture, excited strong feeling in more than one section of the Church. The result of his appointment did not justify the choice of him by the Crown. His literary labour had not rendered him a fitting man for the discharge of episcopal functions. The selection no doubt had a political and party origin, very discreditable to the Establishment, and the bishop, proving an inefficient administrator, soon passed out of public notice, except in his own diocese, where his influence was by no means great.

How did the bench deal with Ritualism? In 1851 a letter was addressed by twenty-four bishops to the clergy of their respective dioceses. "A principle has of

late been avowed and acted on, which, if admitted, would justify far greater and more uncertain changes. It is this: That, as the Church of England is the ancient catholic Church settled in this land before the Reformation, and was then reformed only by the casting away of certain strictly defined corruptions; therefore whatever form or usage existed in the Church before its reformation may now be freely introduced and observed, unless there can be alleged against it the distinct letter of some formal prohibition. Now against any such interference from the undoubted identity of the Church before and after the Reformation, we feel bound to enter our clear and unhesitating protest.”¹

The Bishop of Exeter would not sign this letter, but he wrote at the time a “pastoral” to his clergy, treating Ritualism as a subordinate question, yet justifying an ornate and imposing service, and severely condemning what took place at the meeting just mentioned. He blamed his episcopal brethren for not putting forth a declaration of catholic truth on “the one baptism for the remission of sins;” and counted it little short of mockery to issue a united address, in doubt as to “small matters, many of which do not seem doubtful at all.”² Passing from united action on the part of the bishops in this matter, I may notice hastily the separate course of certain clergymen in relation to that and other proceedings.

Several of the evangelical party considered it necessary to meet their Oxford enemies in the gate. The

¹ *Ritual Commission*, p. 120.

² *Ibid.*, p. 121.

main stress of advocacy chosen by the latter rested upon the press. The Tracts were an arm of strength. Their opponents did not publish a counter series ; they however issued pamphlets in abundance, but their chief literary defence was the republication of works by leading English reformers. In 1840 they established "the Parker Society," and by that means reproduced books written by Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and others ; also reformed liturgies and letters of the English Protestant exiles at Zurich. Bickersteth, Burgess, Churton, Cunningham, Dale, Wilson, and Scholefield, with other well-known names, appear on the list of officers and council. Many of the volumes were valuable, the Zurich letters particularly so ; but the collection presented the Protestant side of the controversy in a scholastic or historical, not in a popular fashion. It was so much heavy ordnance, and for purposes of the hour did little execution. It did not silence the enemies' guns, or disperse one troop of their flying horsemen. The tactics were ineffective for present use, though stores were provided for subsequent occasions, in fortifying the position of those who contended that the reformed Church of England was thoroughly different from what Tractarians were striving to make it.

The Evangelicals were scarcely a match for the Tractarians, taking them on their own ground of literature and learning. Newman and Pusey were eminent patristic scholars, commanded a wide field, were acquainted with its holes and corners, and were subtle adepts in theological controversy. William Goode, then Rector of All Hallows, published in the

hottest hour of the conflict, “*The Divine Rule of Faith and Practice against the Oxford Tracts.*” The writer says, “Our opponents indeed will find that the early Fathers, far from taking the tradition of earlier Fathers as part of their rule of faith, or supposing that the full doctrine was to be found there, in this as in other points, made the Scriptures their rule.”¹ Those who have examined Irenæus and other Fathers will find it difficult to harmonize passages in their writings with Mr. Goode’s position. That the early Fathers did appeal to tradition as testifying what was apostolic doctrine ; that they looked upon the apostolic Churches as conservators of truth ;² that, according to them, tradition went further than Scripture teaching on minor points ; and that the later Fathers interpreted Scripture in the light of traditional doctrine, are points pretty well established. Beyond all doubt, their notion of appealing to Scripture was different from that of Chillingworth ; but looking at their nearness to apostolic times, when comparatively few copies of New Testament books were in circulation, we can easily understand how they came to attach importance to recollections of apostolic teaching in places where apostles had laboured. It is as perilous as it is unnecessary to appeal to the Fathers in support of Protestant convictions, on the subject of Scripture and tradition. Those convictions rest on safer and sounder ground than patristic teaching ; they rest on God’s own word. Mr. Bickersteth, with less learning

¹ Vol. ii. p. 18.

² *Adversus Hæreses*, bk. iii., chap. 4.

than Mr. Goode, entered into the conflict by prefatory remarks to "*The Christian Fathers of the First and Second Centuries.*" He adopted another line, saying, "The light of the apostolic age was soon on the wane, with the exception of a few of the most ancient Christian writings, which appeared immediately after the times of the apostles." As to the rest, "The true doctrine of Christ, and concerning Christ, with that of love, moderation, and sobriety, is not discoverable among them." Another antagonist on the same side, was Isaac Taylor, son to Isaac Taylor of Ongar; he had been himself a Dissenter, but afterwards joined the Episcopal Church as a lay member. He stepped into the arena (1839-40), better armed with patristic weapons, and more skilful in the use of them, though not so forcible as he might have been, because of an unfortunate habit he had of brandishing them aloft, and flourishing them about, instead of reserving his strength for directly aimed thrusts at the weak points of antagonistic arguments. Though, as he said, actually connected "by education and otherwise with Dissenters," he nevertheless professed a firm conviction in favour of the principle of religious establishments and of episcopacy, as well as a cordial approval of liturgical worship, and specifically of that in the Established Church; this enabled him to take a place side by side with Evangelicals in the Oxford battle. In the first onset he declared that the time was "come when the Christian community at large must be thoroughly informed concerning the spiritual and moral condition of the Church during that morning hour of its existence, which too easily,

alas! has been surrounded with attributes of celestial splendour, dignity, and purity." He made it his business, in the volumes, to cite the Fathers, for the purpose of showing how early were the corruptions of Christianity; how innovations were made, especially in the third and fourth centuries, upon apostolical principles; how at the root of the mischief lay a gnostic, ascetical sentiment, which produced a false system of morality, and led to the practice of monachism, together with the institution of corresponding ceremonies. He dwelt upon what he called the Christianized demonolatry of the Nicene age, which affected ecclesiastical principles, so as to render them anything but safe corner-stones on which to build up Church policy. With observances countenanced at that age he confronted the words of Article xxii: "The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God." He treated as idle certain distinctions between 'the Romish doctrine' and some other doctrine, which came so near to it, that people in general could not perceive the difference. Thus he swept away the ground from under Anglican clergymen, who pointed to the Nicene era as a model for posterity. This is the pith of his argument, and it would have been more effective if his course of illustration had been compressed and pointed.

As to some Oxford sympathizers, who touched the banks of the Rubicon, but shrank from plunging

across the water, the pause they made, and their retreat to a former position, may be explained. They had been for some time discontented with the Church to which they belonged. The articles they did not altogether like ; to some parts of the homilies they took exception ; they longed for a more imposing ritual ; the relative position of bishops and presbyters was not satisfactorily defined ; they stood up for apostolical succession ; and thought the ordained ought to have more power, and to be synodically consulted by their right reverend ordainers. Feelings of this sort unsettled their minds. They were no longer at home in the Church of their fathers ; so they turned to the seven-hilled city. Its pretensions were lofty ; it offered what they craved. Its worship was inviting ; its unity and comprehensiveness were attractive. But on coming into close contact and making personal observation, they did not discover in actual existence what they had begun fondly to imagine. Mariolatry was a stumbling-block ; credence given to astounding traditions, veneration paid to relics, pilgrimages made to shrines, and several things of that kind stood in the way of seeking an entrance where others were crowding in. They had proceeded on no steady principles, had been the victims of highly wrought sensibility, had read and talked and wavered ; and then, on a return of old ideas, and perhaps through the influence of old friends, contrived a compromise in their confused minds, and resolved to remain where they were already, according to the vulgar adage of “going farther and faring worse.”

The effects produced by the entire movement are

not so easily determined. They were of different kinds. I cannot but recognise forms of literary service accomplished by the Oxford divines. Some of the tracts are of historical and controversial value ; and the subsequent publication of "The Library of the Fathers" and "The Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology" was a benefit conferred on English scholars ; the help so afforded in the careful and copious notes appended to the text being appreciable only by those who have largely used them in the study of historical theology. The new literary current flowed in the direction of a Nicene revival. The Fathers of the first five centuries were favourite authors with the new class of students. By some of these mediæval theology was depreciated ; the Schoolmen were set aside for other reasons than those which caused neglect of them by reformers. Others however paid attention to the middle ages, and ignorance in reference to that period was caustically exposed. Dr. Maitland distinguished himself by his researches and criticisms in this department of history. He exposed mistakes in relation to what were called the "dark ages." He examined the grounds on which rested some common impressions as to celebrated characters and events at the Reformation period. His prejudice against Puritanism was manifest, but he helped to produce a spirit of salutary caution in making statements without adequate proofs.¹ About the æsthetic revival in architecture

¹ The *British Magazine* contains many examples, and some of his papers have been republished in volumes on "The Dark

and psalmody, which has been going on for thirty years and more, there may be differences of opinion ; but Churchmen and Dissenters who have promoted that revival, if they trace things to their source, must acknowledge that it is partly the result of the Oxford movement. As to increased activity, earnestness, and zeal since produced in the English Church, its waking up fifty years ago must not be overlooked in connexion with the excitement I have described. That excitement was over-ruled by Divine Providence in some cases for much good.

Yet none the less can any sound Protestant lament and condemn the characteristic opinions of the Oxford divines. Those opinions drew off sons of the Church who had been looked up to as its ornaments. They poured in a tide of sacerdotalism which has ever since troubled the adherents of the Reformation, and sadly perverted the teachings of many clergymen. Ritualism, scarcely distinguishable from that of Rome, entered parish after parish ; and this fact damaged the Establishment in the eyes of multitudes, and strengthened popular arguments against its principles. Those who adopt evangelical views, who believe that the teaching of Holy Scripture is unsacerdotal, that Church worship in the primitive age was eminently simple and unceremonial, that salvation by grace through faith, apart from mediæval ideas of

Ages" and "The Reformation." He was a man of great courtesy, as well as great learning. I have pleasant remembrances of a day I spent with him in the Lambeth library long years ago, and of the help he afforded me in investigations I was carrying on.

merit, is the doctrine of St. Paul, and that the written word of God is the ultimate and conclusive standard of theological appeal, must regard the main tendency of the movement as mischievous and deplorable.

It is interesting to notice that something corresponding in character with what I have described, occurred in Germany ; with this difference, that whereas in the Church of England there had always been an Anglo-Catholic school,—and that what the Oxford divines did was to revive the theology of some of the earlier teachers in their own community, in such a way however as to create an impulse Romeward, such as Thorndike, Taylor, and others would have condemned—in the Lutheran Church of Germany no such antecedents existed. But this seems plain, that as political excitements gave a spur to what occurred in England about 1832, so political revolutions in 1848 contributed to what occurred amongst German theologians at that time. The leader in the reaction was Stahl, who died in 1861, eminent for piety and learning ; and what has been said of him may be applied to more than one of the tractarian leaders,—“intolerant towards other Churches, suspicious of any independent association for religious usefulness in his own, disowning pietism because of its unchurchlike character, and in its principles going back beyond the Reformation, discarding the subjective inward principle, and reposing on the objective authority of the Church. Taking a political view of religion, it does not so much ask, What is truth ? but what the Church asserts to be true ? Though not offending popular prejudice by the introduction of Romish

doctrines or rites, it really reposes on the Romish principle of a visible, authoritative Church, with mystical powers, upholding a rigid sacramental theory." It extends "sacramental efficacy to the ministerial office, and denies communion between God and the individual soul independently of the Church as the element of communication."¹ This description of High Churchliness in Germany largely applies to High Churchliness in England.

¹ *Crit. Hist. of Free Thought.* By A. S. Farrar, M.A.

XI.

“BROAD CHURCHMEN.”

1837-50.

THE designation given as the heading of this chapter is now so current in works descriptive of modern theology, that the use of it can scarcely be avoided ; but it is sometimes employed in such a way as to mislead the reader. In its negative meaning, in order to mark off a certain class from others of a different kind, it may be very widely applied. It indicates what a number of theologians are not. They are not Anglo-Catholics : they do not bow down to Church authority ; they have no great respect, certainly no profound reverence, for patristic literature ; they do not feel bound by the four great councils, nor do they study as masters, Thorndike and other authors of his school in the seventeenth century. Nor are they evangelicals like Scott, Newton, and Simeon ; they differ from them in their habits of Biblical criticism, and have no sympathy with them in a liking for Calvinistic systems of divinity. They also are quite distinguishable from the old fashioned high and dry dignitaries and incumbents of the early part of the century.

But when we come to inquire closely into the opinions of men classified under the denomination of

"Broad Churchmen," we find that, on the positive side of their beliefs, they present considerable varieties. Some of them are very logical, and others of them very mystical ; and these are accustomed to look quite askance at each other. Some are inductive, studying Scripture as Lord Bacon would have us study nature, striving as far as possible with an impartial mind to look at revealed facts and principles, and to draw from them conclusions which may be systematically arranged. Others are deductive, proceeding after an *à priori* method, thinking of what truth must be, absorbed in the contemplation of certain primary ideas, which inspire and regulate their religious thoughtfulness from beginning to end. Some believe more, some less. Yet these different thinkers are often ranked together under the same appellation.

For example, Whately is often spoken of as a Broad Churchman, and so he may be loosely called, looking at what he denied or neglected. He fought against Tractarianism. He did not believe in certain doctrines held by Evangelicals, and paid no attention to certain subjects which they deemed of great importance ; but when he is compared with the men I am about to describe, and who also are called Broad Churchmen, it will be found that he ought never to be confounded with them.

Foremost of these, in character as well as date, was Charles Julius Hare. Influences which contributed to make him what he was were so various, as inevitably to give breadth to his opinions. Martin Luther kindled his youthful enthusiasm into a blaze, and it continued to burn until his dying hour. Coleridge

he admired, and he derived from him theological inspiration. Thirlwall was his companion and co-labourer in historical studies. Schleiermacher and Nitzsch were his familiar and influential, though not perhaps commanding authorities. He had not the patristic learning of Newman and Pusey, nor the oriental scholarship of Neale ; but in variety of knowledge he surpassed them all. In his *Vindication of Luther against recent English Assailants*, he defends the reformer's doctrine of justification by faith with all the zeal of an evangelical ; and in some of his notes to *The Mission of the Comforter*, he treads in the footsteps of Nicene Fathers and Anglican divines. He was as wide in his ecclesiastical as in his theological sympathies, and whilst decided in his Churchmanship, he lamented the Act of Uniformity, which drove out so many Puritans. As tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge, he was a guide to ministerial candidates, and as Archdeacon of Lewes, he was a counsellor to the Sussex clergy. In both capacities his influence must have told for much on the interests of the Church of England. Moreover his writings, which for a time had a large circulation, considerably affected public opinion.

There were drawbacks on his efficiency as an author, owing to an excessive diffusiveness of style. His sentences run out to wearisome lengths, and so far from strengthening, they weaken the force of his thoughts ; indeed, he sometimes almost smothers his meaning under pillows of verbiage.

His theology was rather eclectic, derived from different sources of knowledge to which he addicted

himself, his reading being most multifarious, and his own thoughtfulness being so burdened with accumulated learning, that it seemed at times to bend under the weight of it.

In the rural parish of Hurstmonceux, though greatly beloved, his preaching was scarcely suitable, and he seemed out of place; indeed, his prolixity unfitted him for much success in the pulpit anywhere.

One of the pupils who reverently listened to him at Cambridge was Frederick Denison Maurice. In-debted to Hare, he also owed something to Coleridge, but much more to Thomas Erskine, which he thankfully acknowledged. Maurice's teachers deviated from beaten walks, but he was still more original than they, and by his publications excited perhaps more censure and admiration than any man living. His controversial temper, which seems to have been a family distinction, ought to be remembered; nor should his Unitarian education be forgotten. He had to make his way up to orthodox beliefs, ascending, instead of descending, the hill. This is seen in his first important work, *The Kingdom of Christ*, which contains the germs of much which followed. His Boyle Lectures on *The Religion of the World*, as well as his *Kingdom of Christ*, were published before 1850, but his best known books belong to a later date. His sermons on the Old Testament are very remarkable. His expositions of the chapters in Genesis respecting the creation and the fall are unlike anything current then, and suggest, in the former case especially, ideas which, however they may be akin to the realistic philosophy of the middle ages,

are well worthy of careful and unprejudiced consideration. His peculiarities as an author are visible from the beginning. He is often charged with obscurity of style, but his obscurity really belongs to the thoughts rather than the way of expressing them. He does not fail to convey what he thinks, but what he thinks is often vague and cloudy. In no writings perhaps are so many *non sequiturs* found as in his. People complained of his being unintelligible, and this troubled him. Speaking of his friends, he says : " Some of the principles which they discovered and attacked are precisely those to which I most object, some of them precisely those in which all my faith and hope for mankind, if not for myself, are resting. So that I was staggered by the two opposite feelings : that I could not make them the least understand what I meant ; and again, if I did, they would only dislike me the more for it."¹

Some early impressions he never shook off. He was intensely anti-Calvinistic and anti-Anselmic, without, I think, understanding correctly what Calvin or Anselm meant. I am not sure that at the bottom of his own beliefs as to a righteous order in the government of the world, and the supreme will of the personal and perfect Ruler, there may not be found much which corresponds with the thoughts of some he greatly disliked. To the end he rejected the views of human nature, human salvation, and human destiny held by puritan teachers ; but, seen now from some distance, and apart from the personal anta-

¹ *Life of Maurice.* By his son. Vol. i. p. 223.

gonism of his mid career, he must be acknowledged to have made some original contributions to theology in modern times. Truly he may be said to have thought for himself, to have pursued a line of religious reflection peculiarly his own; so much so that, great as was the attention paid to his works some years ago, he can hardly be said to have founded a theological school in the Church of England. His valuable services in reference to Divine truth are that he insisted, with singular emphasis, on the personality and fatherly love of God, the divinity of Christ, the order which lies at the foundation of all things, and the self-sacrificing spirit of the gospel. Much that freethought has since impugned he held with inflexible firmness, and at the same time he declared himself a decided antagonist to the leaders of the Oxford school. His biographer speaks of his reading one of Dr. Pusey's tracts, when it became more and more clear to him that it represented "everything that he did not think and did not believe." After some sympathy with it, he finally parted with Tractarianism. "He always spoke of it with a kind of shudder, as it were of an escape from a charmed dungeon. 'They never have allowed any one who has come within their meshes to escape,' was often his last sentence on the subject."¹ On the other hand, he had no sympathy with the evangelical school in the methods they employed for their own vindication under antagonistic assaults, and for the overthrow of Tractarianism. The newspapers and

¹ *Life of Maurice.* By his son. Vol. i. p. 186.

other periodicals that came to be their recognised organs were conducted in a way which excited Maurice's indignation immensely, and the strong language he uttered against them only exasperated editors and contributors more and more, and confirmed them in their intense dislike of him and his teaching. The whole forms a painful episode in religious history. Two other controversies, signs of the times both of them, into which characteristically he threw heart and soul, brought on him trouble and sorrow. One arose out of his connexion with King's College, amongst whose council and supporters his *Theological Essays*, especially in their relation to the meaning of "eternal life" and "eternal death," produced great anxiety, leading to the separation of him for a time, by their decision, from teaching in the college, an employment in which he took great delight. The other controversy arose out of a difference between him and Mr. Mansel, as to the way in which we know God, a controversy which showed the hopelessness of their understanding each other, as he said himself: he being regarded as "a half fanatical mystic," and his antagonist being "an accomplished Oxford theologian of high reputation." In each of the cases referred to things were done and said on both sides which cannot be approved, and the impression left as to Maurice is that perhaps there never was a man so much misunderstood as he; but the misunderstanding is largely accounted for by his own mode of thinking, speaking, and writing.¹

¹ *Life of Maurice*, vol. ii. p. 311.

His object however was admirable, and it is clearly expressed in his *Theological Essays*: "I am a very bad proselytiser. If I could persuade all Dissenters to become members of my Church to-morrow, I should be very sorry to do it ; I believe the chances are they might leave it the next day. I do not wish to make them think as I think. But I want that they and I should be what we pretend to be, and then I doubt not we should find that there is a common ground for us all far beneath our thinkings. For truth I hold, not to be that which every man troweth, but to be that which lies at the bottom of all our trowings, that in which those trowings have their only meeting point."

The memory of Maurice is to be valued above all, for that extraordinary fellowship with God which the recent Life of him brings to light. He spent whole nights in prayer, like his blessed Lord, a fact which certainly would have been *incredible* to some of his contemporary critics.

Comparing Hare and Maurice with Whately, the differences are manifest. Maurice especially stands apart from him. Indeed, as to the subject of knowing God, which was a cardinal point in Maurice's religious thoughtfulness, he was almost as much unlike Whately as he was unlike Mansel. Those who have looked into the writings of Archbishop King, and read them in connexion with Mansel and Whately, will see a resemblance between the three. They belonged to a different order of thinkers from the memorable preacher at Lincoln's Inn.

Charles Kingsley's name will always be associated

with that of Frederick Denison Maurice. United by a mutual affection, minds like theirs could not fail to operate reciprocally ; but Kingsley was as original as Maurice, and never lost his original bent. The two resembled each other. They also differed. Maurice was a thorough theologian ; Kingsley can scarcely be considered one in the same sense and in the same degree. The latter indented his name on English literature more deeply as a novelist than as a divine. He was a moral teacher, speaking to his countrymen under a veil of fiction, rather than as an exponent of Christian doctrines. Maurice had intellectual lessons to deliver touching the foundation of all things, the living personal God of law and order, and His relation to man as a son and a subject; whereas Kingsley chiefly employed himself in practical appeals to the heart and conscience, and such appeals came burning hot from fires kindled in his own soul. Both affected their friends with a fascinating power. Both addressed the public in the character of prophets, but neither of them can be charged with personal assumption.¹ Maurice, in the dim light of a winter's afternoon, within the chapel of Lincoln's Inn, could hold the attention of a few lawyers and others as he expounded his views ; but Kingsley, in Westminster Abbey, could keep thousands spell-bound, as with natural ease, plain diction, and vehement delivery, he insisted upon general truths which all admitted, but few comparatively had felt as they ought.

¹ In the two or three conversations I had with Mr. Maurice, nothing touched me more than his singular humility.

Hare, Maurice,¹ Kingsley were all Cambridge men. So was Henry Alford. He attained considerable popularity as a divine, a preacher, and a Biblical critic before the year 1850. His Hulsean Lecture on the "Doctrines of Redemption" was delivered in 1841, and his great undertaking, the Greek Testament with notes, commenced in 1844. This is the main column of his fame. The poetic element gushed forth with irrepressible fervour in his *School of the Heart*, and it found what quickened its impulses in the English club at Cambridge, where he met Tennyson, and witnessed "the gradual modulating into harmony of some of those sweetest strains which are now known and felt throughout the world." If in early life, as is said, he leaned on High Church notions, and caught in some measure the spirit which led to the Oxford movement in 1833, "the progress of its leaders towards Romanism gradually disenchanted him." Retaining to the end what may be described as the tastes, feelings, and habits of a Churchman, he lost all sympathy with those who claimed an exclusive right to that title. He regarded the Prayer Book with a reverence and love which members of other communions can understand and appreciate; and when once I asked him, What was the effect on his mind of the daily use of the same words in church, he confessed to the deadening power of the habit, but added that he laid all the blame on himself, and none on the Prayer Book.²

¹ Maurice went to Oxford afterwards.

² This account is based on pleasant recollections of visits to Canterbury.

His opposition to what is generally understood by Ritualism and high sacramental views manifested itself in many ways. "He believed," it has been said, "that the so called Church system is not embodied in the formularies or made the foundation of the polity of the reformed Church of England." Whether his belief was correct may be open to question; but I gladly add the testimony of one who says, "that, so believing, Dr. Alford came naturally to the conclusion that the difference between English Churchmen and those Nonconformists who held fast the substance of faith was not vital, and ought not to make mutual recognition and fellowship impossible." In the latter period of his life he earnestly endeavoured to promote Christian union.

Alford certainly belonged to a class which on the negative side is ranked under the Broad Church title; but he differed widely from Maurice. Though Alford was a poet, he was no mystic; and if he bore a resemblance to his philosophical contemporary in some respects, he presented a marked contrast to him in others. Narrower, as some would call it, in doctrinal thought than his Broad Church brethren, he was broader than most of them in his ecclesiastical opinions.

Frederick William Robertson may not unfitly be noticed here. His publications belong to a later period than 1850, but before that date he made himself felt as a pulpit power. His method of preaching as to arrangement, style, reasoning, and illustration, was admirable. No one had greater skill in what may be called "opening a subject," striking at it with

one strong blow, like a geologist cleaving a flint in two. The heart of the theme is laid bare at once. In his early ministry he contracted prejudices against some doctrines dear to Evangelicals ; his teaching in certain respects was defective, it was generally pronounced “broad”; but he insisted strenuously upon the sacrifice of Christ,¹ and his enforcement of Christian morality was of the highest order. His theology had little in common with that of Whately, perhaps less with that of Maurice. He and Kingsley came closer together.

Another Churchman who began his course amidst Oxford struggles, and who did not belong to either the Anglo-Catholic or Evangelical party, though he admired what was good in each, I cannot pass over, though his chief activity belongs to a later date than 1850. I allude to Arthur Penrhyn Stanley. He had much in him of the mind of St. John. This was partly natural—I believe the result of original constitution—for he was a quiet, meek, gentle boy, winning many hearts; but it was also spiritual and gracious, the result of faith in the Divine Master. “Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance”—these virtues were remarkably conspicuous in his life. Indeed, I have often felt surprised at the unusual amount of charity, long-suffering, and forbearance which he possessed; and I remember once, when he was alluding to some unjust and cruel attacks on his religious character, and I spoke of the patience

¹ See *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 150. ; vol. iii. p. 102.

needful under such circumstances, that he treated it as only one of the proper graces of Christianity, one in which others had excelled him; instancing the case of Archbishop Tillotson, who left behind him a bundle of scurrilous letters he had received, labelled with the words, "May God forgive the writers, as I do!" or words to that effect, for I speak now from a passing recollection of the incident.

There were those who loved him strongly, but differed from him in conceptions of the gospel, who wished that he had given greater prominence to what they esteem as distinctive truths of revelation. His own view, I know, was this: that there is much in the teaching of the Old and New Testaments which transcends our conception, much which, running along lines of mystery, he felt himself unable to follow; but at the same time he would remark, there is much more that is plain, which "a wayfaring man, though a fool," may receive and "not err therein." To these plain things, he said, he desired to cleave; these plain things he endeavoured to preach. The main difference between others and himself in this respect was, that certain principles were plainer to them than to him; and such persons he did not attack, he did not ridicule, he did not condemn. To such he would bid "God-speed"; and I can testify that he appreciated the earnest gospel preaching of those who followed lines different from his own. His appreciation of Wesley, Whitefield, and Robert Hall—not to speak of living men—was distinct and decided; and he often dwelt, even with enthusiasm, on their works of faith and labours of love. It has often

been pointed out, as an intellectual defect, that he could not see differences where others did. It struck many that his vision in this respect was certainly not perfect ; but his delight in tracing resemblances invisible to others was in him a virtue, and one cause of that bond of catholic brotherhood which it was the business of his life to realize and extend. Love made him blind to some differences between his friends and himself.

His affectionate regard for the histories of the Old and New Testaments was intense and frequently expressed ; and I concur in what has been said of the tendency of his "Lectures on the Jewish Church,"— how though there are some, even many points, to which exception may be taken, yet their effect is not like that of certain other criticisms, namely, to unsettle, to confuse, and to shake confidence in Divine history. On the contrary, they serve to confirm, to unfold, and at the same time to bind together, different parts of the one story of God's merciful government of a sinful world.

His habit was not to attack error so much as to build up and harmonize what he considered to be truth. His leaning was to the practical rather than the doctrinal, to a style of teaching, preceptive rather than argumentative ; and as to what may be called the sentimental aspects of Christianity, in the unfolding of these he was singularly skilful. His felicitous adaptation of Scripture texts and incidents to passing events was wonderful. If I may refer to his connexion with Westminster, which did not commence till 1864, in his own abbey, where he felt himself at

home, he could weave around the building many a sacred association ; as when, for example, celebrating the eight hundredth anniversary of the consecration of the edifice, on Holy Innocents Day, he took for his text, "It was the feast of the dedication, and it was winter." This special gift he turned to admirable account in America, where he charmed congregations with his ingenious, unexpected Scripture allusions in reference to historical localities and to buildings sanctified by pious memories.

His work as an author, bringing out stores of learning with rare gracefulness of diction ; his work as a philanthropist in Westminster and elsewhere ; his work as a friend of union, an apostle of charity, a healer of strife, an enemy to bitterness ; his work in bringing Christians together upon grounds of friendship ; his work as Dean of Westminster Abbey, which he strove to make a centre of catholic Christianity, amidst the controversies of Christendom — these works so manifold, and so perfectly in keeping with each other, will never be forgotten, and in ages to come must breathe an inspiration of devotion to God and good-will to men.

Canon Pearson was an intimate friend of Dr. Stanley, of similar views and feelings; like him he possessed high intellectual qualities associated with a truly catholic spirit. He was one of those Churchmen who, whilst sharing in the critical habits of his time, and departing, in some respects, from distinctive views, held by Anglo-Catholics on the one hand, and by Evangelicals on the other, still kept a firm grasp upon the gospel revelation in teachings re-

specting Christ and the Holy Spirit. His attachment to the village of Sonning, on the beautiful banks of the Thames, where he was vicar, and his affection for the poorest parishioner, rose far above what is common in the Church, though much of like character may be found in many rural districts. No offers of high preferment could wean him away from his little flock, and when he saw his end was near, he had one after another of them brought into his room, that he might individually take leave of those whom he so much loved. He was not what may be called a public man; but his abilities and virtues won, as well they might, the admiration and confidence of a large circle.

CHAPTER XII.

SOCIAL LIFE AND CHURCH WORK.

1837-1850.

A CHANGE has come over the spirit of history, and instead of being simply a record of eminent men, whether sovereigns on the throne, ministers of state, or generals in the field, it is now also a record of society at large; and minor matters, such as were once thought unworthy of the historic muse, occupy a large place in the annals of the past. In consequence, it appears that under startling changes of a dynasty, and amidst terrible carnage on the battle-field, or when sieges were laid and towns were taken, civilization held on its way, and there still existed quiet home scenes beyond the roar of artillery and the march of troops. When we turn aside from the bloody Wars of the Roses, as depicted by old English historians, to dip into the "Paston letters," we find that relatives of combatants pursued their accustomed vocations in castles and manor houses, and even the combatants themselves now and then returned from the combat to spend tranquil days in their native village. When again we lay down Rushworth and Clarendon, with their tales of the Civil Wars, and take up Walton's *Lives*, and his

charming *Angler*, we see how, as victories were won at Naseby, Marston Moor, and Worcester, the amiable angler could securely sit on the green bank by still waters, and sport with rod and line, as he listened to birds on the bushes, and thanked God for providing still sweeter music for saints in heaven. So likewise, when stormy seasons were rolling over Church and State in the reign of William IV., when reform bills were agitating Parliament and filling newspapers, when under Queen Victoria the tractarian controversy was fiercely waged, and polemics predicted all kinds of ill, there remained pleasant nooks and peaceful homes up and down the country, where clergy and laymen enjoyed domestic comfort and were patiently serving God.

The bishop's palace is a material embodiment of the episcopalian idea, grand and solemn, yet comfortable and cheerful. The green lawned close, the ivy-covered walls, the cawing rookery, the stately cathedral, the archways and oriels, the groined halls and little chambers, once resting-places for abbots and priors, harmonize with his lordship's home, and form a striking contrast to the abodes of Dissent. Prelatical residences at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign had begun to alter. Gothic architecture did not disappear, but modern convenience required many alterations, and this was symbolical of changes which came over episcopal habits. Baronial magnificence emerged into modest gentility. Coaches and four, such as carried up spiritual peers to Parliament in the Georgian era,

were known no longer, the stage or the railway took their place; and with all this the daily ways of the master and his household underwent a complete revolution.

The palace at Norwich was in a dilapidated condition when Dr. Stanley was appointed to the see, and a country residence a few miles off was suggested as a substitute. "No," said the good man; "a bishop should always be at his post in the chief city of the diocese." Stanley was a model bishop, and only in the centre of his work would he have his habitation. The original edifice of Herbert de Losinga, with its curious crypt, telling of Norman times, and with necessary additions of later date, became a centre of work and social influence very different from what the place had witnessed in former times. Norwich was to him what the village of Alderley had been, and therefore he delighted to make himself acquainted with its antiquities and statistics, to become the patron of its institutions, and to entertain at the palace distinguished guests or societies, whose presence would gratify the feelings or promote the interests of the city. Many still living can remember his hospitality at an annual meeting of the Archæological Institute in 1847, when the old crypt was lighted up for the occasion, and one wandered there as in an enchanted cave.

As his parish had been his home, so was it with his diocese. By careful enforcement of non-plurality and residence acts he wrought a great change. He promoted the building of a hundred additional parsonages in seven years, and in five more altogether a hundred

and seventy-three. His slim figure, white locks, and brisk step were familiar on Sundays to citizens' eyes when, without any previous intimation, he visited one parish church after another, and would sometimes startle an incumbent by suddenly rising from a pew, at the close of the service, to pronounce the benediction. On week days he usually spent the afternoon in visiting schools, established or dissenting alike ; and by endearing acts won the hearts of children, giving sugar plums to the infants, and when they marched singing round the room, he would take one by the hand and join in the procession.

“ He mentioned to a clergyman of the city the wretched state of ignorance in which they were then living, and asked him whether he could find any teachers among his congregation who would willingly devote their evenings to the work of teaching these hitherto neglected children. A number of teachers were soon found, and the bishop went down to the opening of this evening school. The clergyman offered up a prayer, in which a blessing was invoked on the undertaking. It was a striking sight to see the bishop kneeling on the stone floor of the hall amidst the poor children, many of whom in all probability had never knelt for prayer before—such, at least, was the natural inference from their irreverent conduct. The bishop was not discouraged, but sat down and instructed a class of boys with much apparent delight ; and as he returned to the palace remarked to the clergyman who had accompanied him, ‘ What a blessing it will be if we can but be made the instruments of saving the soul of one of these poor children ! ’ ”

It is but a step from the palace to the deanery. Canterbury is a good example of the latter. The

visitor approaches a straggling but picturesque abode, adorned by a shrubbery, lawn, and garden of enviable beauty. Within are walls decorated with portraits of most reverend dignitaries, and a state bedroom used by the primate when on a visit. The sound of the great church clock at midnight to any one sleeping under the hospitable roof has a strange effect. Thither came Henry Alford as dean,¹ after he had served the Church of England in other offices. His study can never be forgotten by those who knew it. He had different tables for different kinds of work—one for Biblical criticism, another for *The Contemporary*, and a third for sermons and other employments; and so indefatigably did he task his time, that he contrived a framework in which to write after he retired to so-called rest. His talent for music had its exercise in connexion with the cathedral choir, and he was also a skilled artist, as numerous drawings in the deanery abundantly testified. He rejoiced in country walks, and his conversations with friends whom he took round the neighbourhood showed that he had a poet's eye, open to what is beautiful and sublime in nature.

His engagements, of which the outside public knew little or nothing, are thus described by his loving wife: "From the time of our arrival at Canterbury he began to attend, as a rule, the meetings of the Ecclesiastical Commission, of which he was an official member. At some seasons this required a weekly journey to London, and it gave him an opportunity

¹ He was not appointed till 1857.

of transacting many matters of business connected with his various occupations. Another office which also belonged to his position as dean was perhaps, somewhat more congenial to his character. He was an official member—indeed, next after the prolocutor, the senior member—of the Lower House of Convocation of the province of Canterbury.”¹ Other deaneries were in some respects different from Canterbury, and other deans were individually unlike Dr. Alford ; yet all had more or less to do with outside matters, all were drawn into the current of contemporary business and excitement.

Archdeacons, unlike deans, have no particular “local habitation,” though they have an official “name.” Their abodes may be inviting retreats in the country, also they may be found in the suburbs and the heart of London. Two representative archdeacons, belonging to the close of the period under review, deserve some notice, as their lives were somewhat retired, and they were better known in private society than from any conspicuous part they took in public affairs.

John Sinclair became Vicar of Kensington in 1842 and Archdeacon of Middlesex in 1843. His tastes were literary. He was well read in general theology, and paid much attention to some branches with which few classical students are familiar. The casuistry of the Church of Rome met with searching and critical examination at his hands, for he was an acute logician, and a sound and earnest Protestant. In one of his charges he discussed this

¹ *Life of Dean Alford*, p. 273.

subject with great learning and ability. He wrote a *Vindication of the Church of England*, an *Essay on Church Patronage*, and other works, amongst which the most interesting is a volume called *Sketches of Old Times and Distant Places*, where his social habits are attractively revealed. Son and biographer of the famous Sir John Sinclair, and connected with noble Scotch families, he had seen much of the world, had conversed with distinguished men of all sorts, and had enjoyed access to private literary treasures, amongst them the MSS. of David Hume. He was full of information and anecdote, which he could dispense in racy Scotch dialect, telling of an ancestress who helped to conceal the Pretender in 1745, and of the great historian and essayist just named, who, as could be gathered from unpublished documents, was not so sceptical in practice and feeling as he was in theory. This archdeacon worked hard in the cause of education, being for many years secretary to the National Society, and he visited America for educational as well as ecclesiastical purposes. The beautiful new church at Kensington was built not long before his death, chiefly through his quiet, unobtrusive instrumentality; the Bible Society and the City Mission received his sanction and support, for he was at once a Low Churchman and a stanch upholder of an incumbent's position, as one who should have under his care, so far as it is possible, all the religious activities of his parishioners.¹

¹ What I have said of Archdeacon Sinclair is founded on a neighbourly friendship during my residence at Kensington for more than thirty years.

William Hale, Archdeacon of London, entered zealously into the more secular duties of his office, attending to matters connected with churches and churchyards, but not overlooking the spiritual design of the ministry. He wrote on the subjects of "Clerical Funds," of "Church Rates," of "Precedents in Ecclesiastical Courts," the last abounding in curious erudition of great value to students of Church history. He also prepared a book for the afflicted under the title of *The Sick Man's Guide*, and another for general use, *The Four Gospels with Annotations*. Archdeacon Sinclair in a charge which he delivered called the attention of the clergy to the study of sermons, and Archdeacon Hale discoursed patiently on Burial Bills. I have been told by a relative of Bishop Blomfield, that he used to say, he had two archdeacons with different tastes—one addicted to *composition*, the other to *decomposition*.

Many rectories and vicarages were greatly improved in convenience and appearance before the middle of this century. The growing taste for ecclesiastical architecture and ornament extended itself to clerical residences, and produced an increasing number of those picturesque buildings, with rural beauties clustered round them, which give such a characteristic stamp to our characteristic English landscapes. Their attractiveness was by no means an index to the value of a living; for an incumbent many years ago, in the county of Wilts, pointed out to me from his drawing-room window, which commanded a wide prospect, some six or seven churches, where the rectors derived from private resources

much more than they received from tithes and other emoluments. Many of their parsonages made no pretension whatever. Eversley will long recall the name of Charles Kingsley, who describes his home in the following words: "1842. Here I am in a humble cottage in the corner of a sunny green,—a little garden, whose flower-beds are surrounded with tall and aged box, is fenced in from the path with a low white paling. The green is gay with dogs and pigs and geese, some running frolic races, and others swimming in triumph in a glassy pond, where they are safe from all intruders. Every object around is either picturesque or happy, fulfilling in their different natures the end of their creation. Surely it must have been the especial providence of God that directed us to this place, and the thought of this brightens every trial. There is independence, in every good sense of the word, and yet no loneliness."¹ Kingsley carried with him memories of his father's life and ministry at Barnack—a lovely spot with a Saxon church and a ghost-haunted rectory—and at Clovelly, a far different neighbourhood. People there, we are told, "sprang to touch more readily, under the influence of their new rector—a man who, physically their equal, feared no danger, and could steer a boat, hoist and lower a sail, shoot a herring net, and haul a seine² as one of themselves." Mr. Kingsley's ministrations in church and in the cottages were acceptable to Dissenters as well as Church people; and when the

¹ *Charles Kingsley's Letters and Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 68.

² A large casting net.

herring fleet put to sea, whatever the weather might be, he would start off "down street" for the quay with his wife and boys, to give a short parting service, at which men who worked and women who wept would join in singing Psalm cxxi. out of the old Prayer Book, as those only can who have death and danger staring them in the face, and who, though storms be sudden and waters deep, can boldly say—

"To Sion's hill I lift mine eyes,
From thence expecting aid,
From Sion's hill and Sion's God,
Who heaven and earth has made."¹

Some parsonages had no charms except moral ones, where the situation was extremely low and damp, and trees, which embowered the house and cottage, kept the whole place during November and December in a swamp of decaying leaves. In such a place Alford's father lived, where he could see only a farmhouse and three or four cottages ; the rectory looking very wretched, shrubs and weeds overgrowing the path, the building out of repair, irreparably so, the foundations having sunk, and everything been thrown out of place. The village was Aston Sandford, where Thomas Scott the commentator lived, died, and was buried. The church walls inside were streaked with weather stains, and the floor was damp and dirty. The Dean's father went afterwards to live at Tunbridge, and a letter written there in 1850 shows what thoughts were passing in his mind, thoughts no doubt

¹ *Charles Kingsley's Letters and Memoir*, vol. i. p. 10.

shared by others of the evangelical class. "More churches, more schools, more ministers, an organized system for visiting the poor and for carrying instruction to those who will not seek it, and above all an episcopate less burdened with worldly rank and worldly business, not raised so high above the rest of the clergy, but resident amongst them, and maintaining intercourse with them, overseers of the Church, these are what we want in the present crisis."¹

The aristocracy of England belonged to the Established Church, and therefore in their ancestral country seats examples were to be found of its influence on the upper circles. Too many of those examples were unfavourable, indeed exceedingly so; but improvement must have taken place, in some parts at least, when the Earl of Stanhope could say in his *History of England*, completed in 1853, "The lord-lieutenant, and for very many former years the representative, of one of the midland shires has told me that when he became of age there were only two landed gentlemen in his county who had family prayers; whilst at present, as he believes, there are scarcely two that have not."² Family worship became more common than it had been, yet in some beautiful instances the practice was of ancient date; generation after generation had honoured the Lord God of their fathers, and the same Prayer Book was handed down from age to age. In one mansion of costly magnificence, in the midst of a lordly domain,

¹ *Memorial of the Rev. H. Alford.* By his son. P. 158.

² *History of Europe*, vol. vii. p. 320.

there would be a beautifully decorated chapel, where the surpliced chaplain read prayers every morning, joined by a considerable congregation of guests and servants; in another, the noble master of the household would conduct devotions in the hall, using a book of prayers suited to domestic occasions.

Far beyond these marks of reverence for what is Divine was the growth of spiritual life and the cultivation of benevolent activities. The religious revival going on in many forms plainly touched the hearts of many a family, and in church services the results were manifest. There might be little real piety in the Christmas and Easter decorations which became so fashionable; but at least they indicated more interest than had been formerly common in the festivals of the Incarnation and the Resurrection. The faith and love of a Puritan were not manifested in such ways, but it would be unworthy of a Puritan to suppose that devoutness could never express itself in such symbolic forms. Altogether unquestionable signs of religion were manifested in the visitation of the poor and sick, in the reading and the praying by wife or daughter from the great house at the bedside of a consumptive girl or of an infirm village patriarch, in the distribution of religious tracts and good books, in cottage meetings, and in the support and encouragement of Sunday and week-day schools.

The religious life of the Church of England found varieties of expression in accordance with social position and clerical leadership. Pulpit teaching would influence every-day conduct. The tradesman's house and the husbandman's cottage would indicate

what the owner had heard on Sunday. The pictures on the walls, the books on the shelf, the tone of conversation would tell whether the incumbent was High Church or Low Church ; and it would be soon found out that the good folks of the household were not Dissenters.

To glance at Church organizations. The Bishop of London's Fund originated in a desire to promote Christian work in the metropolis. It took hold of episcopalian sympathies and received large assistance from the laity. Nearly £200,000 were raised in a few years by voluntary contributions, and with this sum, in three years, seventy-five mission stations were established, with a staff of sixty-seven ordained missionaries, besides Scripture readers and parochial mission women. Forty-seven permanent churches were built or helped, and in this way influences were effectively directed towards the spiritual welfare of about 200,000 people. The actual result it is difficult to estimate.

“Church Aid” and “Additional Curates” societies also came into operation ; and in 1876 an evangelical clergyman¹ informs us : “In regard to the diocese of Carlisle, with which I am most familiar, it might be truly said thirty years ago, in the language of the Hebrew prophet, The ‘watchmen are blind : they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark ; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink.’ Thank God ! through the gradual progress

¹ Canon Battersby.

of a clearer light, and the energetic efforts of two successive bishops of the diocese, who have faithfully striven to uphold Christ's truth, this reproach is now wiped away; and the number of those who are striving for the faith of the gospel is yearly increasing." Comparing the moral and religious condition of the cotton famine district with the riots of previous years, the same writer remarks: "It was a sight never to be forgotten which I had the privilege of seeing during the winter of 1862, when, in company with one of the earnest pastors of the Church in the town of Blackburn in Lancashire, I visited school after school, and building after building, in that town, where men, women, and children were alike gathered together to receive instruction in religion, and in the elements of knowledge, from voluntary teachers in connexion with one or another of the different congregations of the Church in this place."

Various districts may be mentioned as remarkable for Church activity. The dioceses of Oxford and Norwich, not to cite other instances, were stirred up by their bishops. Leeds, under Dr. Hook, was like a beehive, and the chief incumbent of that large town continued with unwearied zeal the efforts he had commenced years before. Cheltenham, under Mr. Close, afterwards Dean of Carlisle—a very different Churchman from his Yorkshire contemporary,—afforded a striking example of evangelical exertion. Windsor felt and expressed the spirit which had been breathed over the royal town by Dr. Selwyn before he accepted his New Zealand bishopric. Abundance of work was done in many places.

As foreign operations of the English Church were enlarged they derived augmented revenues from the public. Meetings were held in behalf of the Propagation and Church Missionary Societies ; and where the claims of the heathen had previously been altogether neglected, people heard of the condition of India and China, of Africa and the South Seas, and were stimulated to take some humble share in the enterprises of which they heard. Villages could be pointed out where a rector, who from his youth had served his people from love to Christ, delighted to gather them together in his own garden, or in the parish schoolroom, to hear of mission and Bible work, and who stimulated them to ingenious devices for assisting the preaching of the gospel and the circulation of the Book of books all over the world.

The reports of the Propagation and Church Missionary Societies, during the thirteen years covered by this chapter, showed plainly how much was being done in our Colonial empire and the heathen world. No less than eighteen new sees were established. Amongst them that of New Zealand stands forth conspicuously. Bishop Selwyn, appointed in 1841, with apostolic heroism made there full proof of his ministry, and in 1847 or 1849 began successful labour in Melanesia. That labour was carried on by his coadjutor, Dr. Patteson, who, after working as missionary six years, was consecrated bishop in 1861 ; and ten years afterwards, like John Williams of the London Society, he died the death of a martyr with two companions on one of the islands of Santa Cruz. An incident connected with Dr. Selwyn's visit to England

in 1854 I am constrained to mention. He had remarked at a Lord Mayor's banquet in London, that the superfluities of social life in England would supply a fund sufficient to evangelize the world, and that he had been taught how many things there are in the world which a colonist can do without. Three days after, he received an intimation that it was no longer the intention of Her Majesty's Government to propose the usual vote for payment of the New Zealand bishop's salary ; objections to parliamentary grants, and the growing efficiency of the voluntary principle, having no doubt led to that decision. "I am the last person," said Dr. Selwyn at a Mansion House meeting for the Propagation Society, " who ought to complain that this use has been made of my own words ; and without wishing in the least degree to bring any charges or censure upon the Government —far from it,—I only wish to express my entire willingness to be one of the first bishops to try the experiment of showing how many things there are in the world, salary included, which he can do without."¹ From some lips such words might have been a mere flourish, but those who knew the man would be satisfied that he meant what he said.

The Propagation Society carried on its operations in India. Tinnevelly, one of its most fruitful fields, came under its tillage in 1835, after being first cultivated by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Little attention had been paid for many years to the converts there gathered, but at the date

¹ Proceedings at the meeting, July 19th, 1854.

just' given no less than "4000 persons were found to have steadfastly retained the profession of Christianity, and the rites of Christian worship, through an entire generation of neglect." Divisions arose between Lutheran missionaries employed by the S.P.C.K. and the Propagation Society, which thought it right to carry out its episcopalian policy ; but these in time were healed, and in 1850 the society reported that the number of native Christians had risen to 10,295. The Church Missionary Society also was doing much good in Tinnevelly.

During the thirteen years specified, the Church Missionary Society increased its clerical agents from seventy-five to 147, and its native labourers from 344 to 1549. Special mention is made of a transitory awakening at Krishnagar (1838), the year in which Marsden died, and of the Himalaya mission in 1844. In no part of the world did the native pastorate so develop as in Tinnevelly, where the Propagation Society occupied one district, and the Church Missionary Society another. John Thomas settled at a place called the "Village of True Wisdom" in 1837, where the wind from the mountains covered the country with clouds of dust. "He dug wells, and soon created a perfect oasis. And the physical change was typical of the spiritual one." In 1850 the Church Missionary Society reckoned that 24,613 native Christians were under its care.¹

¹ *Church Missionary Atlas*, p. 95. Sherring's *History of Protestant Missions in India*, edited by Storror, p. 335. In 1879 the numbers were : S.P.G., 44,069 ; C.M.S., 53,530.

Nothing can be more plain than that the Church of England made a new start. The Oxford movement, political apprehensions, salutary fears as to the future, growing out of clerical unpopularity in the past, the stimulus given by an active party to another which had sunk at least into a state of inertness ; and, better than all the rest, an awakening of personal religion by the Holy Spirit in numerous instances, contributed to produce the result. If here and there rivalries arose, and there came a provoking of one another to love and to good works ; a better inspiration, I doubt not, touched and quickened many a heart. Whatever the cause, and more than one furthered the end, that which followed was indeed salutary, and ought to excite thankfulness for the workings of Divine providence and the effusions of Divine grace. Every Churchman must feel that it was a moral and spiritual change, wrought within a few years, which saved from impending ruin the institutions which he loved with a sacred affection.

CHAPTER XIII.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

1837-1850.

IT was natural that the Oxford movement and the Tractarian controversy should be narrowly watched by Roman Catholics, especially when they saw that this ecclesiastical agitation was preparing some of the clergy to enter their communion. Those of the latter who did so had to submit to re-ordination, as the papal Church attaches immense importance to apostolical succession, and believes that it came to an end in the English Establishment at the crisis of the Reformation. The succession in which the Tractarians had put their trust they were now compelled to repudiate, if they wished to avail themselves of such orders as Rome deemed alone valid. The view of the case adopted by the latter was this. The consecration of Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury was ecclesiastically illegal. Those who took part in it were not officially qualified; there were defects in the form of proceeding. And moreover the spiritual jurisdiction of Anglican bishops is derived from the Crown. The controversy, in some of its branches, is intricate, and to explain it in all its ramifications within the compass of this history is im-

possible. To Low Churchmen and Nonconformists it appears unimportant, since the validity of Christian ministrations are by them placed on other and higher grounds. But the subject is thus far imperfectly noticed, because it is important to apprehend the fact, that Roman Catholics after the Reformation were vigilant in preserving priestly orders in this country, according to their view of the way in which they ought to be perpetuated. It led to certain arrangements, which in the end produced an immense excitement.

From 1585 to 1594 Dr. Allen was the depositary, if I may so say, of the Church's gifts, being constituted by the Pope prefect of the English mission in 1581, and created a Cardinal in 1587. Then came a series of archpriests until 1621. Next followed the institution of one vicar apostolic, which, with a long break, lasted till 1688. A papal appointment of four vicariates then succeeded: the first for the London district, the second for the midland district, the third for the northern district, the fourth for the western district. Things continued in this state until 1840, when eight vicariates were formed instead of four, indicating the progress which Romanism had made in England. Thomas Griffiths, titular Bishop of Olena, was president over the London district; Peter Baines, Bishop of Siga, over the western district; William Wareing, Bishop of Ariopolis, over the eastern district; Thomas Walsh, Bishop of Cambysopolis, over the central district; Thomas Joseph Brown, Bishop of Apollonia, over the Welsh district; George H. Brown, Bishop of Bugia,

over the Lancashire district ; John Briggs, Bishop of Trachys, over the Yorkshire district ; Henry Weedall, Bishop of Abydos, over the northern district. This last comprised the counties of Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Durham. All this appears to be a large and important change ; yet it is remarkable, that at the time it excited very little if any attention beyond the circle of the Roman communion. But it prepared, ten years afterwards, for something further which attracted the wondering eyes of all the Protestants in Great Britain.

Before we reach that event, we must look at debates in the British House of Commons touching the education of Romish priests in Ireland. Until the close of the last century the law did not allow the existence of any Irish college for the education of priests ; but in 1795, the French revolutionary war having nearly closed foreign schools of learning against Irish students who desired to enter the Catholic priesthood, the Irish Government founded an institution at Maynooth, as we have already seen, for the use of Roman Catholics, who formed a large majority of the Irish people. It was supported by the Irish Parliament, and handed over to the English Government at the time of the Union. The origin of the establishment, and the obligation involved by the terms of the Union were pleaded on behalf of continuing grants out of the English exchequer ; and further, it was argued that this was not a solitary case of the kind, since the State provided for Roman Catholic chaplains and for Roman Catholic worship in other and different ways. In 1845 Maynooth had

fallen into decay, and Sir Robert Peel proposed a grant of £30,000 for restoring the edifice, and also an augmentation of the annual endowment from less than £9000 to £26,760. This charge was to be made on the consolidated fund. Catholic emancipation had shown that Englishmen were disposed to concede to Romanists political rights, and to deliver them from the persecution they had long endured ; but it was not likely that zealous Protestants would look calmly on at this new proposal of the prime minister. What he had done already prejudiced many people against him, and this, in connexion with the Tractarian movement and the zealous activity of English Catholics, aroused Protestant apprehensions all over the country. Numerous Churchmen were inimical to the grants, simply on Protestant grounds. They hated Romanism, and they believed it was a national sin to give it encouragement. In fact, they felt towards it somewhat as Roman Catholics in Italy and Spain feel towards Protestantism ; they were ready to ask, What would be thought in those countries, if the government were to propose a subsidy for supporting schools for teaching the doctrines of the Reformation ? But when this ground was taken by members and advocates of an Established Church, they were confronted by an awkward circumstance, namely, that Irish Protestants formed a minority in their own country. If it be the duty of a government to support religion, the question arises, What form of religion is to receive such support ? If one form, must it not be conceded that the religion of the majority should have the

preference? and as the majority in the sister isle were Catholics, should not they therefore receive endowment from the State? If more than one form be assisted, how can the religion of the majority be excluded from all help? It was not easy for those who adopted the principle of a State establishment to evade this kind of reasoning. But whatever was wanting of logical argument in some opponents of the grants, was made up by violent abuse. One member of Parliament¹ exclaimed, "Really, if I had not seen the First Lord of the Treasury take the oaths at the table of this house, I should have doubted whether he were a Protestant or a Roman Catholic or a Mohammadan, nor should I be surprised if the time should yet come when we shall see him sitting cross-legged as a Mohammadan or embracing the Pope."

Those who adopted the voluntary principle, who believed that no government ought to make pecuniary grants to any religion whatever, and who consequently declined to accept it for their own, could at all events oppose the Maynooth grant without laying themselves open to the charge of sectarian bigotry. In opposing the scheme, they took a stand which was quite consistent with the utmost attachment to religious liberty.

In spite of this twofold opposition, Sir Robert Peel carried his point. Beyond this, he secured the foundation of three new colleges in Ireland for the education of students apart from tests and religious

¹ Colonel Sibthorpe.

distinctions. No denominational tenets could be permitted, but lecture rooms were allowed for the use of denominations willing to accept the provision. Protestant opposition had been directed against Maynooth ; now popish opposition arose and attacked the new colleges. They were stigmatised as "godless" ; the Synod of Thurles prohibited the clergy from ministering in them, and a rescript from the pope in 1851 sanctioned that proceeding. A short time elapsed, and another step looking towards the papal city was taken. Rome had excommunicated England and England's queen in the sixteenth century, and had done nothing since to withdraw the ban ; under these circumstances, it was thought by many that no friendly relation could exist between an English sovereign and a Pope of Rome. Consequently, until 1848, there was no formal connexion between the two courts. At that time however an Act was passed, not without difficulty, allowing some sort of correspondence between the court of St. James and the court of the Vatican. But two years had not passed when diplomatic civilities, which had recommenced, were rudely shaken.

Before proceeding further, it should again be remembered that a considerable change had occurred in the circumstances of the Catholic Church within this kingdom. For half a century it had gradually developed itself. Tractarianism and proselyting efforts had succeeded in bringing over well-known Protestants to the Romish communion ; churches had been built, and communities established, and persecuting laws had fallen before the advances of political free-

dom. The secession of clergymen from the Establishment and their subsequent activity had told in many ways, and helped on the anti-reformation progress. A number of converts, or perverts, as they were called, from amongst the upper classes had increased the pecuniary resources of Catholicism, and the ability and learning of its new advocates had promoted its interests in several respects.

It was natural, with an increase of numbers, that in high quarters means should be taken to preserve and extend the advantage by new ecclesiastical provisions. Rome had continued, as I have said, a spiritual jurisdiction in England by successive arrangements, last by having eight vicars apostolic. They were not, be it remembered, bishops of English dioceses, but ecclesiastics holding episcopal rank, and discharging episcopal duties under foreign titles. At the new crisis Pius IX., encouraged by what had occurred, placed Romanism in this country on the same basis as in continental dominions.

The measure was promoted by a priest of English descent, a native of Seville, in Spain. Nicholas Wiseman was born in 1802, and educated partly in Ireland and partly in St. Cuthbert's College, near Durham. Ordained in 1825, he spent much time in Rome, and won for himself high reputation by his literary acquirements and by lectures he delivered to English visitors and residents in the papal city. Returning to this country, he attracted much attention, and devoted himself to the advancement of his own Church. In 1840 he became one of the English apostolic vicars, and resident of St. Mary's College,

Oscott. He was summoned to Rome in 1850, and received an appointment to the archbishopric of Westminster, created by the new scheme of Roman Catholic administration in this country. He was also made a Cardinal priest. Dr. Wiseman had not an ascetic appearance; he bore no resemblance to Francis of Assisi and similar saints; he mixed in society, was of active habits, commanded a highly rhetorical style of address, and became a public character by his appearances on numerous occasions. He frequently officiated at the foundation and opening of ecclesiastical edifices, and as a preacher of charity sermons. His literary and theological productions were numerous, and whatever criticism might be pronounced on his florid style, all united in acknowledging his learning and ability. But it is a mistake to suppose that what is called the Catholic aggression was an original idea on the part of Dr. Wiseman; for it appears from documents in the Vatican, that in Elizabeth's reign the restoration of the hierarchy in England was contemplated, and, in the appointment, first of four and then afterwards of eight vicars apostolic, probably something ulterior was looming in the distance. A brotherhood was enrolled in England about the year 1843, for promoting the restoration, and amongst the members was Canon Rock, a distinguished antiquary, well known in Kensington, where he resided. A petition was sent to Rome in 1845 from an annual meeting of the vicars apostolic; and two bishops, Wiseman and Sharples, were despatched to the Vatican for the same object. The propaganda encouraged the measure, but the Pope

declined to give any opinion until he said mass three times ; after the third time his mind was made up. “Adesso sono tranquillo” were the words he used to express his approval.

In Rome the business was helped forward by Dr. Grant, an eminent English ecclesiastic, who afterwards became Bishop of Southwark. The scheme reached a definite shape in 1847, and Pius IX. then ordered apostolic letters to be prepared, dividing England into eight dioceses—Westminster, Leeds, Plymouth, Birmingham, Northampton, Liverpool, Newcastle, and Newport.¹ But these letters were not published, and the several briefs, though engrossed, were not despatched ; political events stopped the way. The Pope was driven from Rome by the revolution of 1848, but in 1850 the work was consummated ; and in the letters apostolic then issued the steps are recapitulated which had been taken with a view to “provide for the prosperity and increase of the Catholic religion in the kingdom of England.” These letters were dated September 29th, 1850 ; and Dr. Wiseman, then in Rome, lost no time, but sent over a pastoral to England, dated October 7th, 1850, from “the Flaminian Gate.” In this epistle the following passage occurred : “Your beloved country has received a place among the fair Churches which, normally constituted, form the splendid aggregate of Catholic communion ; Catholic England has been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament, from which its light had long vanished, and begins

¹ There are more dioceses now.

now anew its course of regularly adjusted action round the centre of unity, the source of jurisdiction, of light and of vigour."

The division of England into territorial districts by a foreign power might in itself have been offensive to English Protestants, however quietly arranged ; but this style of pretension, this flourish of Italian rhetoric, as it has been called, proved an unpardonable offence to multitudes of English subjects. The pastoral sharply accentuated the act of papal assumption ; and when the bishops appointed were enthroned amidst the pomp which Romanists know so well how to employ, it was ostentatiously declared, that "the people of England, who for so many years had been separated from the see of Rome, are about of their own will to be added to the holy Church." Expressions of such presumptuous hope added fuel to the fire.

Previous clerical secessions to the revived faith aggravated the public feeling. Exaggerations came in aid of existing impressions. Proselytism was said to be going on everywhere ; Jesuits were thought to be creeping into every house ; the wealth and the rank of England were said to be travelling towards the eternal city, as they had done just before the revolution of 1688. Newspapers and periodicals were filled with exciting articles. The press was flooded with pamphlets, platforms echoed with speeches, pulpits rang with denunciations against Rome, and deputations from privileged bodies addressed her Majesty. A deputation to Windsor Castle met some Roman Catholic noblemen who had come to assure the

Queen of their loyalty ; and in conversation, when the audience was over, one of the Catholic gentlemen expressed his regret at what had taken place. Protestant feeling, roused to the highest pitch, turned attention to an exposure of Romanist errors and designs, and no doubt good was done in this way. But many, not satisfied with the use of argument, cried out for legislative interference. A letter, called the Durham Letter, written by Lord John Russell, in an ultra-protestant tone of feeling, greatly increased the excitement. He denounced the aggressive act as “a pretension of supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the Queen’s supremacy, with the rights of our bishops and clergy, and with the spiritual independence of the nation as asserted even in Roman Catholic times.” “I rely,” he added, “with confidence on the people of England, and I will not bate one jot of heart or hope, so long as the glorious principles and the immortal martyrs of the Reformation shall be held in reverence by the great mass of a nation, which looks with contempt on the mummeries of superstition, and with scorn at the laborious endeavours which are now making to confine the intellect and embrace the soul.”

Whilst the eyes of multitudes were fixed on the Flaminian Gate as a source of danger, others, sharper sighted, saw that the peril to Protestantism lay nearer home. The cardinal’s letter and the brief under the seal of the fisherman were trifling matters ; not so the Tractarian spirit, which had begun to honeycomb the Protestantism of the Church. That excited real

alarm. What was to be done? One nearest the throne, looking out thoughtfully from the windows of Windsor Castle, wrote a memorandum, which of late has come to light.

"We have intense excitement and animosity of parties, and the most heterogeneous elements, views, and interests joining in the outcry against the Pope, and particularly against the Puseyites. There will be no want of proposals in the next session of Parliament for special measures of detail: assembling of the Convocation; alteration of the rubric; change of the Thirty-nine Articles; removal of the bishops from the House of Lords; increase of the bishops; alteration of tithes; separation of the Church and State, etc., etc. And it is very likely that the fire of indignation against the Romanisers will spend itself, and the end be general discontent and a weakening of the Church. If this is not to be the inevitable consequence of the present movement, those who mean to lead it ought to be content with the assertion of some intelligible and sound principle, and should endeavour to find some proper formula for expressing it.

"The principle will easily be found if the common cause of discontent, which has occasioned the excitement, has been ascertained. If strictly analysed, this cause appears to be the introduction of Romish doctrines and practices by the clergy of England, contrary to the will and feelings of the Protestant congregation, under the assumption that the clergy alone had any authority in Church matters. If this be the fundamental evil, against this ought the remedial principle to be directed; and this principle might be thus expressed: 'That the laity have an equal share of authority in the Church with the clergy. That no alteration in form of Divine service shall therefore be made by the clergy without the formal consent of the laity. Nor any inter-

pretation given of Articles of Faith without their concurrence.' This principle once recognized as law, a whole, living Church constitution will spring from it, including Church government and doctrines."¹

This reads admirably well, but how was the theory to be put in practice amidst the confusions so clearly discerned by his royal Highness? No doubt, Lay influence claimed a voice, and a loud one in the settlement of the dispute; yet the constitution of the Church as a national establishment, treating everybody as a member, religious or irreligious, Episcopalian or Presbyterian, Independent or Methodist, rendered the solution of the problem in that way perfectly hopeless.

When national indignation had been roused, Dr. Wiseman and Dr. Ullathorne endeavoured to allay the disquietude by conciliatory expressions, and the new episcopate, when carried into effect, appeared a less formidable affair than antecedent boasting had led the nation to expect.

Still people said "something must be done"—a vague saying common at such times. The Catholic Relief Bill of 1829 had forbidden an assumption of English and Irish ecclesiastical titles. But that law had not been broken. There was no Protestant Archbishop of Westminster or of the other places named. Papal bulls too were illegal, but orders from Rome to English Catholics, though constructively perhaps coming under that denomination, had been

¹ *Life of the Prince Consort*, vol. ii. p. 57.

silently circulated, and could scarcely be prevented in dominions where religious liberty was allowed. Proceedings at law against the new Archbishop of Westminster were out of the question. The Roman brief indeed assumed authority in this kingdom, and Dr. Wiseman had ostentatiously said, "We govern, and shall continue to govern, the counties of Middlesex, Hertford, and Essex." In Elizabeth's day such pretensions would have brought down heavy penalties, but under Queen Victoria things were different. The political sting which such claims might carry could easily be extracted.

An Act of Parliament was the remedy proposed by the author of the Durham letter, and in 1851 he introduced a bill prohibiting the titles assumed, and pronouncing rescripts creating them unlawful. The bill embraced Ireland, where such titles had been long allowed. Opposition was made to the measure, and the objections urged were, in some cases, contradictory to each other. Large majorities however supported the common idea that "something must be done," but as to what exactly it should be opinions differed. Amendments were made and rejected. At length the bill passed, but it proved a dead letter. Dr. Wiseman continued to be called Archbishop of Westminster, and no power was employed to prevent it. Yet this did not secure a victory for ultramontanism. The Protestant feeling of the country, in the course of the excitement, found unmistakable expression; the titles proved harmless assumptions, and perhaps Romish policy itself served to check Romish conversions amongst English clergymen,

rather than otherwise. A great increase of Roman Catholic activity since 1851 cannot be denied. However considerable before, it became much more so afterwards. In 1829 there were 394 Roman Catholic chapels; in 1851 there were 823. The priesthood during the same period had mounted up from 477 to 823. But the comparison between 1851 and 1875, when a letter was sent to the Pontiff on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the restoration of the hierarchy, is much more striking. In this quarter of a century the number of priests had more than doubled, and the number of chapels nearly so. Religious houses, at the beginning having in them sixteen priests and fifty-five nuns, at the end contained fifty-five men and no less than 257 women. Colleges were multiplied. Schools for the poor reported no large number; but schools for the higher class showed 133,823 pupils. All this however only indicates the earnest zeal of our Roman Catholic neighbours. How many converts have they made from the ranks of Protestantism? is quite another inquiry.

Soon after the passing of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill a Roman Catholic priest, who had distinguished himself in the world of letters, died in tranquil retirement at the age of eighty. Dr. Lingard began in 1819 the publication of his *History of England*, and completed it in 1825. Successive editions issued from the press during the Oxford controversy and the preparations made for the papal aggression. He visited Rome after completing his laborious work, and had a red hat offered him by the reigning pope, Leo XII., but the honour was declined by the

accomplished recluse. In all ecclesiastical and religious matters his *History* bears unmistakable signs of orthodox opinion, according to his own Church standards. Free individual thought, in that wide circle, cannot be expected from a priest of his communion, however honest and conscientious he may be. Indeed, honesty and conscientiousness, while he is in the Church, make him a servant to its authority and an advocate on its behalf. But where Church interests are not involved, Dr. Lingard may be trusted. His acuteness and erudition are undeniable; and in the absence of eloquence, his unaffected style carries a reader pleasantly forward, and rewards the perusal of volume after volume. He published anonymously an English translation of the New Testament, which is said to be an improvement upon the Douay version. But he did not enjoy the confidence of his brethren. Milner deprecated his being made a bishop. "In learning," says a Catholic historian, "indeed, he had advanced beyond his expectations, but not in piety; and his loose writing about Cranmer and the so called reformers, gave offence to Bishop Milner."¹

¹ Maziere Brady's *Annals of the Catholic Hierarchy in England*, printed in Rome, p. 273. To this work I am indebted for many particulars.

CHAPTER XIV.

DISSENT AND THE ESTABLISHMENT.

1837-50.

THE Church and State controversy was fanned into a flame hotter than ever by a visit of Dr. Chalmers in 1838 to the metropolis, where he delivered a course of lectures on the subject. Willis's Room was crowded with an unprecedented audience to listen to the orator from the north. Royalty was there in the person of the Duke of Cambridge, and marquises, earls, viscounts, bishops, and members of Parliament listened with enthusiasm to the Scotch defender of Church establishments. From some who were present I heard of individual demonstrations, betokening extravagant delight. The particular theme selected was "the establishment and extension of national Churches, as affording the only adequate machinery for the moral and Christian instruction of a people." Dr. Chalmers contended that the diffusion of Christianity was the highest of all duties, that the State should elect and employ some one Church to accomplish the work, and that it should be adequately endowed for this purpose. His ideal instrumentality was an establishment Protestant but not exclusive, in which Dissenters should sink,

as he was ready to do, objections to Episcopacy, whilst the Church should open her bosom wide enough to take them all in. He rejoiced in an organized provision for the clergy, but deprecated the authority of the civil magistrate in matters of religion. Strangely enough, he declared he was not aware of any serious practical obstacle to ecclesiastical independence in England ; and at all events he knew of nothing more perfect than the constitution of the Church of Scotland, an opinion he practically dropped soon afterwards by heading the northern disruption. The rapturous reception of these lectures showed what a determined resolve there was amongst the upper classes to uphold an establishment of some sort—no matter what—rather than to adopt the stigmatised voluntary principle. Dr. Chalmers' utopian idea was quite inconsistent with the actual ecclesiastical constitution of this country, and to realize it involved a revolution as great as disestablishment itself. As if only Scotchmen were fit to settle this question, the Dissenting Deputies invited Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, to answer these lectures a year afterwards. They were of a different order from the preceding ones. Chalmers was an unrivalled master of popular eloquence ; Wardlaw excelled in critical analysis and logical argument. The result may be inferred. Of course the reasoning would be differently estimated by different parties, but no one can deny the ability with which the defence was conducted throughout. He carefully analysed the terms "ecclesiastical establishments" and "voluntary principle," examined the theories of Mr. Gladstone

and Mr. Coleridge—that of a national personality and conscience, maintained by the first; that of a “national clerisy,” or civilization establishment, maintained by the second.¹ He then entered on a long scriptural argument,² and proceeded to assert the efficiency of voluntaryism and the evils of establishments.³ Both lecturers took up the question as *religious*, not as *political*; both appealed to Scripture—Dr. Chalmers to the Old Testament, Dr. Wardlaw to the New; and both maintained the Church’s independence of the State. Their controversy did not touch a stage soon afterwards reached.

I have already referred to the Ecclesiastical Society, and to the Church Rate Abolition Society. The former was more advanced in its demands than the latter, and some of its publications were not approved by a considerable class of Nonconformists. Amongst them was Josiah Conder, who had long taken part in dissenting affairs. He was a poet, and he also edited the *Eclectic Review* from 1814 to 1837. That periodical maintained a high character, inasmuch as the editor numbered amongst friends and contributors the names of James Montgomery, Robert Southey, John Foster, and Robert Hall. Mr. Conder was a man of refined taste, critical skill, and unquestionable piety. He had lofty conceptions of the moral obligations pertaining to men who appear before their fellow men

¹ *National Church Establishments Examined*. Lecture i.
See pp. 20, 25.

² *Ibid.* Lectures ii., iii., iv.

³ *Ibid.* Lectures vi., viii.

as authors and editors. "There was a tone of conscientiousness in his advocacy of dissent beyond praise, and he carried out his personal convictions in ways disliked by some of his friends. 'I have not chosen,' he said, in the language of Colonel Hutchinson, 'the party, but the principles they profess; and I am not therefore so unreasonable as to expect their gratitude for services and sacrifice, which they are more ready to claim as their due, than kindly to appreciate.'"¹ In 1832 he added to his earlier employments that of an editor of a religious newspaper entitled *The Patriot*, in which he had to undertake political warfare. In none of these departments did he carry with him entirely the approval of extreme advocates on his own side. He objected strongly, in some respects, to the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, and laboured to establish what he named the Religious Freedom Society, "a general union for the promotion of religious equality." He drew up three fundamental propositions, on which the organization was to be based.

"That it is the paramount duty, and therefore the unalienable right, of every man to worship his Creator and Redeemer according to his religious convictions of the Divine will, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures, the only authoritative rule of faith. 2. That to compel any one to contribute to the support of religious rites of which he disapproves, or of the ministers of a Church from which he dissents, is manifestly unjust, and at variance with the spirit

¹ *Josiah Conder*, Memoir by his son, p. 126.

and principles of Christianity. 3. That State establishments, by which any particular Church or sect is selected as the object of political favour and patronage, and its clergy are invested with exclusive rights and secular pre-eminence, involve a violation of equity towards other denominations, create serious impediments to the propagation of the gospel, render the religious union of Protestants impracticable, and are the occasion of inevitable social discord.”¹

A religious aspect was given to this movement. It pointed to scriptural grounds, upon which mere political agitators could not proceed, yet it did not satisfy all who looked at the whole question from a spiritual point of view. A number of Christian men therefore, including Sir Culling Eardley Smith, then a member of the Establishment, Dr. John Young, a Presbyterian, together with Dr. Cox and Dr. Campbell, formed an evangelical voluntary Church association, which eschewed political agitation, and admitted none to their ranks but professors of evangelical religion. Both this and the Freedom Society were short lived. They perished in infancy, the latter because of vagueness on the one side and restriction on the other; the former because it aimed at producing life through organization, rather than organization through life. Mr. Conder’s cry was “organize,” supposing that there was enough in existence of the life he valued, and that it only needed to be brought into action; but he soon found that there was little of the vitality on which he calculated, and that there

¹ A Society on this basis, and bearing the name just mentioned, was established in May, 1839.

was no inspiration on the part of committees and officers for carrying out elaborate resolutions.

Still it remains true that during the years covered by this chapter a new tide of thought and feeling set in. Under the discipline of circumstances, always an efficient factor in the development of opinions, Dissenters looked more deeply into the controversy between themselves and the Established Church than their fathers had done at the beginning of the century ; the principles of willingness, as they came to be called, were brought to the front. Not that they were new doctrines, but rather old roots of thought which had really been lying under the surface of Nonconformity from Puritan times. However, they now began to be more prominently exhibited. The complications of ecclesiastical with political questions, together with the growing influence of Nonconformity in national affairs, further promoted measures of activity with regard to matters affecting Church and State, such as would have surprised the earlier Nonconformists.

That which gave an impulse to what was attempted must be distinguished from the political restlessness, the democratic ambition, the purely secular ends and means proposed by an increasing number of Englishmen at that period, who, sympathizing in continental revolutionary schemes, sought to overturn the Divine foundation of society, and to tear up altogether the relation of politics to religion and of religion to politics, so that the vessel of the State should be left to no other pilotage than man's wisdom, which, without any higher inspiration than its own, in times

of perplexity and trouble often plunges into disastrous folly. Men, who from simple secular motives aimed at disestablishment—motives which, compared with those whose movements have just been described, were wide as the poles asunder—might openly scoff or secretly smile at the profession of evangelical religion ; but that evangelical religion was really the secret spring of the enterprise, of which the originators had no reason to be ashamed, who took the word of God as the star to guide their course.

A new organization on the line of the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society appeared in 1844, helped forward by political considerations, which came more and more to mingle themselves with the religious aspects of the question. A conference was held in the spring of 1844, when a great number of English and Scotch delegates assembled, including Dr. Wardlaw and Josiah Conder. Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Unitarians were represented ; but the greater proportion of those present came from the midland counties. Besides Dr. Pye Smith, Dr. Cox, and Mr. Burnet, no conspicuous London ministers identified themselves with the enterprise ; Dr. Campbell joined it for awhile, and then retired. Prominent amongst the advocates was Mr. Edward Miall, an able man with deep convictions and disinterested aims, who left the pulpit for the press, and started the *Nonconformist* newspaper. His hand for many years was on the helm of the new vessel, launched by the conference under the name of the “British Anti-State Church Association.” The religious element was retained, but the political became more and more

active. It found warm supporters in different parts of the country, but many distinguished Nonconformists, strong voluntaries on religious grounds, stood aloof. Mr. James, of Birmingham, remarked to an American friend: "We are not agreed among ourselves. Many of us are opposed to a confederation, half religious and half political, entitled the 'Anti-Church and State Conference.' This has had its influence in originating a new periodical, in which moderation is to be arrayed against ultraism."

It ought to be noticed in connexion with the Anti-State Church controversy that those who supported it were by no means inimical to the Episcopal Church as a religious institution. So far from it, they conscientiously believed that, if freed from State control, and left to develop the energy and resources it possessed, it would be far more effective than it is at present. They rejoiced, as we have seen, in its increased spirituality and zeal, and were in many instances ready to help in building churches and in carrying on other kinds of religious work. They condemned church spoliation and violent methods of terminating an alliance with the State.

"To break," said Dr. Pye Smith, "its manifest connexion with our civil institutions in any other way than by the gentle operation of conviction in the minds of its own members would be venturing upon a dark and very perilous course. My ardent wish and prayer is that the Establishment may be improved, delivered from evils and defects of every kind, and meliorated, honoured, and blessed to the highest perfection of conformity to the requirements of the holy Scriptures; when that time arrives the Episcopal Church will have a

power immensely greater than that of any other denomination of Christians. Her venerable edifices, her hold upon the affections of Englishmen in general, her endowments equally distributed (for I trust that no spoliation will ever be suffered), and the unfettered activity of her ministers upon a system of freedom in worshipping and preaching in any barn or hovel or field, will be likely, under the blessing of Heaven's grace, to produce effects of the most glorious kind in the advancement of genuine religion.”¹

Whatever might be thought of the reasonableness of these expectations, the expression of them by such a man as Dr. Smith showed how unfair were the charges brought against Nonconformists in general, that they were animated by antipathy to the Episcopal Church in England.

I may conclude this chapter by stating that in 1851 a census was taken, whence it appears that on Sunday, March 30th, there were found in attendance at places of worship 4,378,789. Of these 2,541,244 were present at the services of the Established Church; the rest included Protestant nonconformist congregations. To these were added 252,783 Roman Catholics.

Another fact may be mentioned here :

“In 1876 a select committee of the House of Commons was appointed, to which the Public Worship Regulation Bill was referred, and a statement of the numbers of the clergy taken from the Clergy List was laid before it. This showed their total number of all grades to amount to

¹ Sermon by Dr. Pye Smith, published in 1834. Appendix, p. 29.

nearly 25,000. It is worthy of notice that, in comparison with the enormous growth of population in recent years, there has been nothing like a proportionate increase in the numbers of the clergy. In 1811, when the population of England and Wales did not much exceed 10,000,000, the number of the active clergy was about 16,000, while in 1871, with a population considerably over 22,000,000, the same class did not number much over 19,000."¹

¹ Elliot's *State and Church*, p. 25.

CHAPTER XV.

“FREE CHURCHES” OF THE PERIOD.

1837-1850.

TURNING to the internal affairs of those commonly known by the above designation—leaving Methodism for separate notice—attention may be first given to Congregationalists, because of their prominent position and activity at that time, owing in a great degree to the speedy growth of the Congregational Union.

The chairmen of the union between 1837 and 1850 included, besides those already described, certain ministers who claim some distinct notice.

Richard Elliott, who occupied the chair in 1841, had been, if I mistake not, a thoughtless young man, who, in passing by Surrey Chapel one night, was attracted by the lively singing, audible outside; entering, he heard words he never forgot. For many years he sustained with honour a position in the town of Devizes, where, and indeed throughout the west of England, his name was a tower of strength. Friend and neighbour to Jay, of Bath, he united with him in promoting the cause of evangelical religion, to which his Nonconformity was subordinate and tributary. He presented an example of the power of character,

and told for very much, through what he *was*, no less than by what he *did*. He embodied in life a vast amount of spiritual vital force. People *felt* and acknowledged the goodness of such men.

John Reynolds, of Romsey, chairman in 1843, was characterised by graceful manners and genuine politeness. His father, I believe, was court physician; he himself became secretary to a minister of State, and, until death interrupted their intercourse, shared the acquaintance of his schoolfellows, the Marquis of Lansdowne and Viscount Palmerston. His glowing domestic affection, fervent piety, self-sacrifice for conscience' sake—for he lost much by being a Dissenter—and irrepressible zeal were crowning distinctions of a long and useful life.

John Burnet was chairman for 1845. As "Burnet of Cork" he was very popular, and his appearance on a platform elicited rounds of applause. Of middle stature, strong build, round face, with a countenance combining intelligence, geniality, humour, and a touch of sarcasm—with endless resources of illustration, and singular tact in debate—he could command at will the largest audiences, and lead them on from gay to grave, with an Orpheus-like enchantment. He rarely wrote, but read much, so that he was one of Lord Bacon's full men. His memory was marvellous, and he could combine humour with pathos. His wit was sometimes caustic, but this in preaching was put aside; in the pulpit no one could be graver. In private he engrossed conversation, and in conducting an argument was prone to put down an opponent with a stroke of satire or a flash

of drollery, when it was difficult for him to produce conclusive reasoning.

Dr. Vaughan, chairman for 1846, at that time residing in Manchester, had previously been pastor of a Church at Kensington, where he had attracted a number of hearers not often found in dissenting chapels. As Professor of History in the London University, and as the author of the *Life of Wycliffe* and other important historical works, he had become known in literary circles ; and this circumstance attracted many distinguished persons, who listened with pleasure to his preaching. No one could look at him on great occasions without being struck with his appearance and manner. The searching glance from under his knitted brow, his compressed lips, his lordly bearing, his attitude and gesture, revealed what was out of the ordinary way, and created expectations rarely disappointed. He took a leading part in the promotion of union between general culture and evangelical religion. Devoted to the latter, he considered that too many of its advocates in earlier days had neglected the study of literature, beyond their own particular domain, and it was his strong conviction that both the piety and the intelligence of Englishmen might be improved by bringing the two things into relation with each other. No one opposed more than he did a subordination of Scripture to the authority of human reason ; no one could be more determined to resist an invasion of the order in which the two had ever stood in the orthodox Churches of Christendom.

The chairman for 1850 was Dr. Morison, editor

of the *Evangelical Magazine*, and prolific in the authorship of useful works ; a man of unbounded industry and irrepressible spirits, who, though suffering a martyrdom of pain for many years, would not relax in his efforts to serve the Divine Master, thus combining two qualities generally separated, activity in doing and patience in suffering.

The Colonial Missionary Society was formed in connexion with the union, as I have stated already. Two other societies previously in existence were brought into organized connexion with it. The Home Missionary Society originated in the year 1819. Its constitution at first was undenominational, but in course of time it became practically a Congregational institute. Men were sent out into destitute districts to preach and visit amongst the neglected inhabitants, and grants in aid of poor Churches were sometimes made by express vote. County associations assisted in supporting the society's agents, and an academy for the training of home missionaries was established for a time at Cotton End, in the neighbourhood of Bedford, under the superintendence of the pastor of the village. Out of this movement grew what are called "home missionary pastorates," a group of villages with a central place of worship, being committed to the spiritual care of an accredited teacher. The training at Cotton End was discontinued when larger establishments for the same purpose arose at Nottingham and Bristol, and the organization of the home mission was in 1859 so far modified as to be placed under the control of county associations affi-

anced to the Congregational Union of England and Wales.¹

The Irish Evangelical like the Home Missionary Society was first built on a catholic basis; but as the denominational element increased, it affected this with other institutions, and in 1840 the promotion of Protestant Christianity after this manner virtually fell into the hands of the Congregational Union. The old name was still retained, but committee arrangements were framed to associate the society with the Home and Colonial, under the comprehensive designation of British Missions. Ireland, always a trouble to England, was found to be so in this case; numerous conferences and discussions ensued with no satisfactory result. The board was dissolved in 1856, but the three departments of work were carried on as before, only under new regulations.

The Union at an early period determined to publish a periodical entitled *The Christian Witness*, which, together with religious and literary information, was to include a treatment of the question of the day—Church and State. “It involves,” said the prospectus, “the principal interests, both religious and political, of the British empire.” “To fire the mind we must illumine the judgment and awaken the conscience. Line must be upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, and this will not be forgotten in the *Christian Witness*.” This

¹ For this account I am indebted to Dr. J. H. Wilson, who zealously served the home mission as secretary for several years.

appeal was written by Dr. Campbell, and illustrates the spirit and manner in which he conducted the periodical. His ability, self-possession, and defiance of opposition were unquestionable ; so also was the tenderness of his domestic affections. He could be a lion on the platform, and a lamb in the parlour. He was fitted to work by himself and in his own way ; but was not fit to represent other people, and to carry out the plans of a combined enterprise. Hence differences arose respecting the editor, and between the editor and some of his brethren. With the editorship of the *Christian Witness* he combined that of the *Penny Magazine*, which however was confined entirely to theological and practical topics. What complicated the relation in which the editor stood to the Union was that he edited at the same time a newspaper called the *British Banner*, which came to be associated by many with the din of battle and the shock of arms, and this publication, not being under the control of the Union, expressed opinions unapproved by some of those whom, in another editorial capacity, he was considered to represent. The reign of religious newspapers commenced some years before, and instead of discussing important questions apart from party considerations, they took their place by the side of secular prints, as representing different schools and shades of opinion, throwing their influence into the support of particular denominations, or of some section belonging to one or other of them. The position could not but be full of danger to both writers and readers ; and the danger proved too great in many instances for

either to overcome. Strife was provoked and promoted. The *Banner* unhappily did not escape the perils which encompassed it, in common with other periodicals of a similar type. Party questions were taken up in a party spirit ; severe censures were passed on men and things, and personalities only aggravated the very evils which had called them forth.

The Congregational Lecture was immediately connected with the Congregational Library, and might be said to belong to the Congregational Union. In 1840 Dr. Alexander, of Edinburgh, delivered Prelections on the connexion and harmony of the Old and New Testaments. He showed that both Testaments belong to the same national literature ; that both unfold the unity of the Divine nature, and indicate distinctions in the Godhead ; that the manifestation of the moral character of God is alike throughout ; that the righteousness and love of God revealed in the first is seen more fully in the second ; and that together they announce the incarnation and atonement of the Son of God, and the way of salvation through Him. Dr. Bennett, in 1841, turned to the Fathers, and exhibited the Theology of the Early Christian Church, giving copious extracts from patristic literature as illustrative of opinions held respecting revelation, the Divine nature, the divinity of Christ, the Trinity, redemption, election, and justification, also the Church, the sacraments, and Christian ethics ; finally he set forth the causes of the peculiar character stamped on the doctrines of that age. He looked at his subject from a Puritan

point of view, but left his quotations to speak for themselves, without seeking to press them into the service of denominational interests. He did not regard the earlier any more than the later Fathers as authoritative guides to the interpretation of Scripture and Christianity. The next lecturer, Walter Scott, in 1843 selected as his subject the existence of Evil Spirits, not as a topic for curious speculation, but as one illustrated by Holy Writ and having practical bearings on mankind. Entering, as it were, the invisible world under guidance of the Bible, he dwelt upon the personal existence and the inimical agency of fallen angels; attempted inquiries into witchcraft, divination, and demonology; set forth his conceptions of our Lord's temptations; and applied to his hearers and readers practical lessons drawn from the doctrine of Satanic influence over human minds. Dr. Halley, in 1844, called attention to the doctrine of Sacraments, devoting a first course to baptism, and reserving a second for the Lord's supper. He found himself necessarily in a controversial field, and after discussing the baptism of the Jews and the baptism of John, points surrounded by thorns of disputation, he attacked Anglo-Catholics in an exposure of the dogma of baptismal regeneration,—Baptists as to the mode and the subjects of the ordinance,—and some of his own denomination for restricting baptism to the children of believers. It is more controversial than any former series, except perhaps Gilbert's on the Atonement. The lecturer for 1845 was Dr. Payne, already mentioned as a chairman of the Union. He

had been educated partly in Scotland, and had imbibed a strong taste for Scotch metaphysics. He exhibited his attainments in this branch of study by a work on Mental Science, in which he walked closely in the footprints of his instructors. His metaphysical habit of thought appears in his Congregational Lecture on Original Sin, which he described as the present native state and character of man. His opinions were not exactly the same as those of the Puritans, and he differed from Anglo-Catholic teaching on the subject. The statements of Augustine and Jonathan Edwards he could not adopt. He rejected the notion of imputed sin, and also that of the human race having existed in Adam, so as to have a moral identity with him. To say that we have consented to Adam's sin, and therefore have virtually committed it, as Stapfer argued and as Edwards held by adopting his argument, Payne pronounced to be a betrayal of evangelical truth "by false and sophistical arguments."¹ His main point is that the advantages enjoyed by Adam, and which the lecturer defines as "chartered benefits," were forfeited by his fall. Those benefits, he said, did not pertain to Adam's station, or his physical nature, or his intellectual faculties, but to his moral and spiritual state, as originally a holy being ; and these gifts of sovereignty admitted of suspension, and were suspended through a violation on the human side of the original Adamic charter.

Dr. Hamilton, in 1847, took up the revealed doc-

¹ Payne's *Congregational Lecture*, p. 89.

trine of Rewards and Punishments; but though he treated the subject in its Scripture aspects, he commenced with an inquiry into the nature of law and its necessary connexion with Divine sanctions. The responsibility and the immortality of man, and the resurrection of the body, suggested inquiries into the invariableness of moral ideas, the defects of human legislation, and the position occupied by the idea of recompense in an economy of grace. A lecture follows on heaven, in which the author gives play to his imagination, and the last three discourses are devoted to the subject of future punishment, in which he maintains the doctrine of its eternal duration.

Dr. Davidson, in 1848, examined the Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament, treating of Church offices, and the election of pastors and deacons. The balance of power, the nature of ecclesiastical courts, as well as the constitution of the primitive ecclesia exhibit an unusual independence and freedom of handling; and whilst defending the actual system of Congregationalism, he says, and I think very justly, that Independents are "wrong in splitting up what ought to be one Church, the company of believers in modern towns, into several Churches, each with its own pastor, which, in their independent individuality, are patches and shreds, often incapable of a right self government, because they have lost sight of the unity and kind of government existing in the earliest Churches."¹

The lecture for 1849 was undertaken by Dr.

¹ Davidson's *Congregational Lecture*, p. 123.

Stowell, on the Work of the Spirit ; and the gist of the whole book is contained in these propositions : The work of the Spirit in renewing the *sinner* is not essential to the responsibility and obligation of the *man* ; the spiritual life which we ascribe to the Holy Ghost produces, as its fruit, whatever can be included in the highest morality ; this spiritual life secures results which transcend the aims of philosophy ; and the practical energy of the spiritual character displays the harmonious workings of the spirit of man and Spirit of God.

It is sufficient to specify, as briefly as possible, the lines of thought pursued in these Prelections, without attempting any critical inquiry into their plan, their arguments, and their style. Like all such productions, they differed considerably in their degrees of merit, but on the whole they will bear respectable comparison with other volumes of the same class.

A tide of change set in amongst Independent colleges. Lancashire was the first to receive the benefit which it brought. The Academy, as it had been called, at Blackburn, after a revival under Dr. Payne, before he removed to Exeter, was found in 1838 to need further change. The standard of admission was low, the term of study short, and the preaching engagements were numerous ; hence a determination was formed to reorganize the institution, and for this purpose to remove it to Manchester, where greater facilities would be afforded for the accommodation and culture of students. A site for a handsome building was secured at Whalley Range ; the foundation was laid in 1840, and in 1843 a college was opened

for fifty students, with Dr. Vaughan as president and professor of theology, and Dr. Davidson as professor of Biblical criticism. This establishment has since been connected with Owen's College, so far as to reap the advantages of its extensive Art courses, whilst the theological faculty carries on an advanced system of education within its own halls. Dr. Payne having left Blackburn for Exeter, he there pursued educational work until the year 1845; but the number of students declined, the constituency in the neighbourhood felt unable to sustain it, and to prevent its dissolution, the ministers and friends at Plymouth determined to remove it to their own vicinity. Accordingly temporary premises were engaged, Dr. Newth, now Principal of New College, London, was associated with Dr. Payne; and in 1852 it was resolved to erect a suitable college building, which reached completion in 1861. Dr. Payne, who died in 1848, was succeeded by Dr. Alliott and the Rev. J. M. Charlton.

A still more important change took place in London. In 1843 the attention of the constituencies of Coward, Homerton, and Highbury Colleges was called to what has been termed the wasteful expenditure of money and teaching power in the separate maintenance within a limited neighbourhood of three institutions, similar in their nature and aim. Conferences were held between the different authorities, and, after much deliberation, measures were adopted to unite these old academies. A fresh edifice was needful for the accommodation of the combined classes, and a suitable site in St. John's Wood being selected, New College was built upon it, and opened

in the year 1851. Dr. Harris, who had previously presided at Cheshunt College, was elected the first Principal. An important innovation was made on the traditional arrangements of dissenting academies. Previously, students had been resident in buildings provided for education. In this instance they were to be non-resident, certified lodging houses being secured for their use.

The Congregationalists established a Chapel Building Society for London in 1848, and the earliest edifice to which it contributed was Horbury Chapel, Notting Hill. The first stone was laid that year ; the project originated with the congregation at Kensington, who were anxious to provide increased accommodation for the neighbourhood, and they sent out a swarm of members to constitute the nucleus of another Church. It was reported three years ago that new Congregational chapels had been erected or were in progress, accommodating about 105,750 persons, and costing nearly £700,000. Fifteen of these chapels were entirely built or paid for by the society. The same body of religionists established in 1853 a Chapel Building Society for England, Wales, and the Channel Islands. A Manse Fund was added, and later on an Irish Fund. Five hundred and forty improved places of worship, meeting the wants of half a million of people, together with twenty-two manses, were results registered in 1881, the whole property being valued at upwards of £1,000,000. The Lancashire and Cheshire Congregationalists in 1868 undertook a work of their own for supplying the spiritual wants of their own localities.

Foreign missionary labour during the ten years embraced within this chapter was vigorously carried on by Congregational Churches, and two of their representatives won so universal a fame, and so conspicuous a place in English religious history, that it would be unpardonable to pass them by in these volumes.

There lies on the floor of Westminster Abbey a slab with this inscription :

"Brought by faithful friends over land and sea, here rests David Livingstone — missionary, traveller, philanthropist. Born March 19th, 1813, at Blantyre, Lanarkshire; died May 1st, 1873, at Chitambo's Village, Ulala. For thirty years his life was spent in an unwearied effort to evangelise the native races, to explore the undiscovered secrets, to abolish the desolating slave trade of Central Africa, where, with his last words, he wrote, "All I can say in my solitude is, May Heaven's blessing come down on every one, American, English, Turk, who will help to heal this open sore of the world."

A cotton-spinner's boy, employed from six in the morning till eight at night, he fixed a book on the spinning jenny, and so learned Latin. On summer evenings and during holidays he studied the rocks and woods of his native Clydesdale. Out of savings from hard toil he paid his expenses at the University of Glasgow, and there gained a medical diploma. But before this he experienced a change, with the history of which many who know him as a traveller are unfamiliar.

"Great pains," he says, "had been taken by my parents to

instil the doctrines of Christianity into my mind, and I had no difficulty in understanding the theory of our free salvation by the atonement of our Saviour ; but it was only about this time that I really began to feel the necessity and value of a personal application of the provisions of that atonement to my own case. The change was like what may be supposed would take place were it possible to cure a case of colour blindness. The perfect freeness with which the pardon of all our guilt is offered in God's book drew forth feelings of affectionate love to Him who bought us with His blood ; and a deep sense of obligation to Him for His mercy has influenced, in some small measure, my conduct ever since.

. . . . In the glow of love which Christianity inspires, I soon resolved to devote my life to the alleviation of human misery. Turning this idea over in my mind, I felt that to be a pioneer of Christianity in China (that was the sphere he desired at first) might lead to the material benefit of some portions of that immense empire ; and therefore set myself to obtain a medical education in order to be qualified for that enterprise."

He received ordination amongst the Independents, and sailed for Africa in 1840. He is soon found in the beautiful valley of Mabotsa, studying the native language and habits. Missionary life suggested to him all sorts of philanthropic aims, and, in the pursuit of these, not from a mere love of adventure, he afterwards started to ascertain the situation of mysterious lakes, and to trace the course of unknown rivers. His discoveries have been published to the world, but only few Englishmen could enjoy his personal acquaintance ; those who did can testify to his extraordinary simplicity of character, his determined will, his undaunted courage, his wide intelligence, his calm

missionary zeal, and his childlike piety. His last explorations and his last words will never be forgotten. "Build me a hut to die in," he said, "I am going home. I am very cold, put more grass over the hut."

His wanderings have deepened and extended our interests in Africa. Geography in abstract forms is forbidding; but the occurrence of startling incidents, tales of adventure, instances of heroism, acts of philanthropy can colour and adorn the dullest of sandy deserts; and in many a house where little was known of the land of Ham attention has been fixed by Livingstone's travels, and out of distant mists spot after spot has loomed in bright sunshine. The reports of the London Missionary Society inform us of his early labours in preaching the gospel.

His father-in-law, Dr. Moffat, was in the African field before Livingstone; and about the time the latter commenced his career, the former visited this country during leave of absence to inform English Churches of what he had witnessed and of what, through God's blessing, he had also achieved. No one who knew him only as an old man can have any idea of the speeches he delivered forty years ago, when he kept thousands in breathless attention, as he related, in genuine poetical diction,—which made his pictures of Dutch homes, Bechuana huts and congregations start into life,—what he had seen of the transforming power of the gospel in heathen lives amongst the most ignorant and degraded of the human race. His humility in private, his absorption in missionary work wherever he went, were as remarkable as those recitative utterances on the platform and in the pulpit,

which, like the cadences of an ancient bard, awakened sympathetic echoes in the minds of delighted auditors.

On completing what I have to say with regard to Congregationalism, I may be permitted to remark that after the lapse of thirty years I can look back with pleasure upon the ministers of that generation. They were deserving of the love and honour they received, and I may add there were others rising into public life prepared to follow in their steps. Some of the latter are gone; their Master called them away earlier than the elders. Amongst them was the saintly Samuel Martin, of Westminster Chapel, of whom his neighbour, Dean Stanley, always spoke with peculiar reverence and affection, telling how a clergyman after a visit referred to him as an "angel-like man." To his name may be added that of David Thomas, of Bristol, whose elevated and genial character won from a wide circle unusual attachment, and whose rare, indeed unique, spiritual power in the pulpit captivated and subdued all who were capable of entering into sympathy with one so thoughtful and so good. Others claim notice. Enoch Mellor, of Halifax, a man and minister of another type, a favourite pupil of Sir William Hamilton at Edinburgh, addicted to logical processes of thought, which led him along theological lines remote from everything like mysticism, and showing his intellectual strength in argumentative defences of what he conceived to be evangelical and ecclesiastical truth, whilst generous affections endeared him to a wide circle of friends; and Alexander Raleigh, also belonging to a different class of thinkers and speakers, quick at

catching beautiful phases of Bible story, touching sentiments of Holy Writ, and lovely aspects of our Saviour's life, and aptly wise in connecting them all with the experience and duties of daily life, these two fulfilled a ministry which has left precious memories in the hearts of those who listened delightedly to their earnest teaching.

One of the contemporary members of the Congregational body, who entered the ministry about 1830, and became more widely known in his later days, was Henry Rogers. Not as preacher, or platform orator, or denominational leader, or man of business, did he ever distinguish himself; but perhaps in literary circles, as philosopher, critic, and controversialist, his reputation surpassed that of any of his brethren. As early as 1834 he wrote an *Essay on the Life and Genius of Jonathan Edwards*, and not long afterwards he published *Memoirs of John Howe*. In 1842 we find him contributing an article to the *Edinburgh Review* on the life and writings of Thomas Fuller, which was followed in successive years by brilliant essays on a large number of subjects. Luther, Leibnitz, Pascal, Socrates, Descartes, and Locke passed under a searching, discriminative, yet sympathising examination, and into controversies about the Oxford school and rationalism Rogers threw himself heart and soul, lashing with severity those whom he regarded as opponents of Protestant and orthodox principles. One can detect sometimes a strong love of victory, blended with loyal advocacy of truth; but of the sincerity of the latter and his perfect disinterestedness there can be no doubt.

A work of his, entitled *The Eclipse of Faith* (1852), was a most important contribution to the controversy then going on between the new school of philosophers, opposed to Christianity, and those who adhered to the gospel revelation. To attacks on this work he wrote a reply, and I remember learning at the time how affected he was by reflections cast on the moral character of Jesus. He felt pierced to the heart by dishonour done to Him whom he looked upon as his closest and dearest friend.¹

¹ I cannot forbear quoting the words of my old fellow student in his *Eclipse of Faith* (p. 125) in reference to "spiritual insight," set up by philosophers as a criterion of religious truth : " Even as to that fundamental position, the existence of a Being of unlimited power and wisdom (as to His unlimited goodness I believe that nothing but an external revelation can absolutely certify us), I feel that I am much more indebted to those inferences from design, which these writers make so light of, than to any clearness in the imperfect tuition ; for if I found, and surely this is the true test, the traces of design less conspicuous in the external world, confusion there as in the moral, and in both greater than is now found in either, I extremely doubt whether the faintest surmise of such a Being would have suggested itself to me. But be that as it may, as to their other cardinal sentiments, the nature of my relations to this Being, His placability if offended, the terms of forgiveness if any, whether, as these gentlemen affirm, He is accessible to all without any atonement or mediator,—as to all this, I solemnly declare that, apart from external instruction, I cannot by interrogating my racked spirit catch even a murmur. That it must be faint indeed in other men, so faint as to render the pretensions of the certitude of the internal revelation, and its independence of all external revelation, perfectly preposterous, I infer from this, that they have for the most part arrived at diametrically opposite conclusions from those of these interpreters of the spiritual revelation. As to the articles, indeed,

He was a man singularly destitute of pecuniary and social ambition: offers of emolument and invitations to mingle in circles attractive to most men he steadily declined, and preferred a humble and retired life in connexion with duties as an author and tutor. For many years he filled the office of a professor in Spring Hill and Lancashire Colleges, and educated his students by *viva voce* comments on principles and books, in a way which stimulated the intellect to active and patient inquiry. His conversational powers were of a high order. He delighted in Socratic dialogues, and showed puzzled and surprised inquirers the way to truth by warning them against paths of error. With all his multifarious reading, and breadth of philosophical inquiry, he retained a warm and even passionate attachment to the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, resenting aspersions cast on His history as injury done to the character of a personal friend. His attachment to the cause of evangelical Nonconformity

of man's immortality and a future state, it would be truly difficult for my spiritual insight to verify theirs; for according to Mr. Parker, his insight affirms that man *is* immortal, and Mr. Newman's insight declares nothing about the matter. Nor is my consciousness, so far as I can trace it, mine only. This painful uncertainty has been the confession of multitudes of far greater minds; they have been so far from contending that we have naturally a clear utterance on these great questions, that they have acknowledged the necessity of an external revelation; and mankind in general, so far from thinking or feeling such light superfluous, have been gaping after it, and adopted almost anything that but bore the name. What then am I to think of this all sufficient revelation from within?"

was very strong, and he could not do or say anything, however great the worldly advantage might be in some people's estimation, which would at all compromise his position as a conscientious Dissenter. He enjoyed the friendship of such men as Archbishop Whately and Lord Macaulay, whom he sincerely esteemed and admired, gratefully acknowledging the benefits he had received from "the splendid productions of their genius."¹

The survey of the thirteen years included within this chapter suggests private memories of Congregational life. It was less known, more quiet and retired than it is now. Almost every pastor could say, "I dwell among my own people." Summer excursions all over Europe were uncommon, and a visit to America or the Holy Land was rare indeed. Ministerial engagements at a distance were blended with holiday pleasures, and delightful was a summer ride on the top of a four-in-hand coach to some distant town, with a warm welcome at the journey's end. Pulpit exchanges, chapel openings, anniversaries, and ordinations were frequent, and formed chief breaks in the monotony of home; and if there was little comparatively of public excitement, there was abundance of tranquil satisfaction.

From the Independent we turn to the Baptist denomination.

¹ See dedication of his *Essays* in three volumes. I confine my notices of ministerial friends to those who have finished their course; and now, as this page is passing through the press, I have to add the singularly honoured name of James Baldwin Brown.

A double work was undertaken in the metropolis by a distinguished Baptist, Sir Morton Peto. He built Bloomsbury Chapel, near Oxford Street, where, nearly up to the time of his death, William Brock, after a prosperous ministry at Norwich, laboured most successfully amongst the people of London. A thorough Englishman, with a countenance inspiring confidence, a gift of speech rich in Saxon utterances, a mind full of common sense, a heart inspired with warm affections, and habits of indomitable activity, he drew and kept together a crowded congregation, who contributed a new source of Baptist power, when the denomination had been on the decline. Dr. Brock was a catholic Christian, loving good men of every name, and I have heard him tell how on Sunday mornings, when he and his neighbour, the Hon. Mr. Villiers, afterwards Bishop of Durham, met on the way to church, the one would say, "The Lord be with thee," and the other respond, "And with thy spirit." Sir Morton Peto soon afterwards purchased and fitted up for worship, in Regent's Park, the Diorama, where painted views had been popular; and he turned the place into a Baptist chapel. Dr. Landels was the first pastor.

The Baptists up to the period just named had not been represented before by such imposing edifices as now appeared. The meeting-houses in Keppel Street, Eagle Street, Little Wild Street, Devonshire Square, and other localities had made no pretensions to architectural style, and the congregations they accommodated were by no means large. For some reason Baptists and Methodists were in the rear, as

to their metropolitan position ; but at the date we have reached both denominations began to make a new start, and their efforts have been crowned with a large accession of adherents. But as the trade of London absorbs such an immense space, as many of the houses in the main thoroughfares are left empty on a Sunday, their masters having taken residences in the suburbs, the increase as to number in Baptist places of worship,—and the same may be said of Wesleyans and others,—has been mainly in those enormous suburbs which stretch out from the great centre in all directions. There nonconformist, as well as Episcopal, communities find ample scope for their spiritual ambition, and in those fields of sacred toil the Baptists have not been slow to labour. In the great hives of industrial activity all over the midland and northern counties they have further manifested their zeal and assiduity. Leicester, Manchester, Liverpool afford eminent examples.

From 1850 down to the present period the Baptist denomination has been active and successful, and in 1883, according to a summary of statistics for that period, there were in England 2,926 chapels and 1,936 churches, 219,414 members in communion, under the care of 1,415 pastors.¹

An important step was taken by some leading men in the Baptist denomination just on the edge of the present chronological division. In the course of the year 1836 the Baptist Translation Society was formed. The missionaries at Serampore were

¹ *Baptist Handbook*, for 1884.

laborious Bible translators, and down to the year 1827 they received grants in aid from the British and Foreign Bible Society. Then the committee were formally apprised that in the Indian version the Greek word for baptism was translated "immersion." Other missionaries complained of the practice, saying that it did injury by limiting a term which was widely translated by the large majority of Christians. It was asked by the committee whether there was any hope of relaxation in the strict mode of rendering the term. Dr. Carey's reply was unfavourable. On the other hand, the Bible committee felt bound to entertain the objection made by paedobaptist labourers in the mission field. They therefore stipulated, as terms on which alone further assistance could be rendered to the brethren, that the Greek word in question should be rendered by a word derived from the original, or of such a kind as would be unobjectionable to paedobaptists. Whereupon the Baptist Missionary Society replied, under the impression of further argument being useless, that it could not proceed to any particular consideration of the points in question. An application for continued help was renewed by the mission board in 1836, and this re-opened the controversy. The application was declined, and against this proceeding a protest was presented, signed by above five hundred ministers of the Baptist union. As the committee had acted on prudential grounds, considering that the persons composing their constituents entertained different opinions respecting baptism, it expressed itself determined to adhere to the course pursued with regard

to the English and other versions. Strictures on the Society's position were published by one author ; the course taken by the Society was vindicated by another ; the result of the whole discussion being the commencement of a "Bible Translation Society," to countenance those translations alone, which rendered the controverted term by words exclusively signifying *immersion*. The movement, it is said, was not approved by the entire Baptist body.¹

Of Baptist ministers, besides those already mentioned, who flourished in the early part of Queen Victoria's reign, the following may be mentioned : Charles Birrell, of Liverpool, author of *The Life of Richard Knill*, who, like the subject of that volume, had laboured in St. Petersburg, a man of singular refinement and culture, thoughtful, affectionate, winning, as in public so in private ; George Gould, of Norwich, a stanch advocate for open communion, who carried through successfully a law-suit for removing restrictions from access to the Lord's table in St. Mary's, Norwich—a man of business capacity, with lawyer-like shrewdness, and strong attachment to evangelical truth ; finally, Dr. Manning, a young minister at that period, full of hope and promise, completely fulfilled in after years, cut short, alas ! not long ago.²

¹ *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, vol. i. p. 172.

² Written in 1882. My notices of Baptist brethren must end, as in other cases at the year 1850, leaving out many I have known and loved.

Presbyterians come within this chapter. They are divisible into two classes: the old English, those whose predecessors formed the first section of the original three denominations; and the New Scotch, those composed of Free Church and United Presbyterian ministers.

The old English Presbyterians, who had adopted Unitarian opinions, seceded, as we have seen, from the general body of Protestant dissenting ministers. Circumstances embittered subsequent relations, and others of an earlier and later date infused into the strife, if not bitterness, yet greater alienation. In 1824, thirteen years earlier than Queen Victoria's accession, a speech by a Unitarian minister at Manchester provoked reprisals on the part of those whom he attacked. They said that a large number of buildings occupied by Unitarians did not belong of right to them, because those buildings had been endowed for orthodox uses; and even in 1817 the case of a meeting-house so circumstanced, at Wolverhampton, had been thrown into chancery, where it lingered nineteen years. Before its settlement an important question was submitted for decision,—whether charities bequeathed by Lady Hewley, and at the time of this suit in Unitarian hands, did not legally belong to other religionists, seeing that, though the trusts were unspecific, her ladyship undoubtedly had been orthodox. The fact is, that at the period of the bequest Unitarianism lay under a legal ban. The Toleration Act unjustly withheld liberty of worship from those who denied the Trinity, and therefore property left to the unorthodox was

subject to forfeiture. Proceedings against Lady Hewley's Unitarian trustees, carried on by members of the Independent denomination, of course excited deep displeasure in the old Presbyterian body, and for a time at least, in many instances, brought to an end all kindness between the two denominations. This lamentable rupture was completed when the suit was decided in favour of the applicants. New trustees were appointed, and such an arrangement awakened alarm in all who held endowments on terms similar to those of the Hewley estate. "The suit being at an end," wrote Mr. Aspland to his son, "we must look for something more, the event having thrown down all our fences and exposed us to inroads from our enemies. The opinion of almost all our professional friends is, that, according to the law as now declared, all our foundations before 1813 are endangered, say even the Gravel Pits"—his own place of worship,—"and also Duckinfield"—where his son preached,—"you having built upon a Trinitarian foundation, as the law, 'the perfection of reason,' will have it."¹ The Wolverhampton case, following the law in Lady Hewley's business, came to be decided in favour of orthodox plaintiffs. It was natural that Unitarians holding property on ancient foundations should be concerned at the dark prospect before them, and I do not wonder at their seeking shelter from threatening storms. They found friends in Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, Mr. Macaulay, and Mr. Gladstone. A measure was brought before

¹ *Life of Aspland*, p. 577.

Parliament to prevent further disturbance of trusts where buildings had been held by the present occupiers for twenty-five years. The bill went by the name of the Dissenters' Chapel Bill, though in truth it affected advantageously, not Dissenters in general, but Unitarians in particular, if not entirely ; their possessions alone appeared in danger. The bill, introduced by the chancellor and advocated by Lord Brougham in the Lords, met with great opposition, especially from the Bishop of London (Dr. Blomfield), who, followed by the Bishop of Exeter (Dr. Phillpotts), made a speech on the subject, claiming that the interests of orthodox religion at large, not those of orthodox Dissenters merely, were involved in the issue. The Government and all the law peers supporting it, the bill was carried by forty-one against nine. Church people, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, and Baptists petitioned that it might not be made law ; numerous pamphlets also were issued on both sides. A strong conviction of right moved each party, one insisting upon right by virtue of law, the others upon right by virtue of possession. Theological zeal showed itself still more potent, the Unitarians being valiant for free thought, their opponents determined to preserve orthodoxy. When amidst the raging storm the bill reached the Commons, debate waxed hot between Peel, Russell, Macaulay, and Gladstone, who supported it, and Sir Robert Inglis, Fox Maule, and others, who opposed it. The argument both in and out of Parliament on the side of opponents to the Bill was "that the intention of the founders, where it can be ascertained,

by means consistent with the rules of legal interpretation, should govern and regulate the administration of charitable trusts in all future time." An argument in favour of the bill, and carrying with it great weight—in fact, the Lord Chancellor's argument—was, "evidence is lost by lapse of time, parties are no longer able to establish by direct evidence; but the lapse of time establishes by continued possession, another title balancing and replacing the title that has been lost."¹ With this reason another appeared, namely, that without an act to settle such questions, there would ensue from the Hewley decision no end of confusion, no end of suits, no end of expense. The Hewley costs amounted at the time to nearly £30,000; and two or three hundred new suits were lying in wait to follow. The bill passed, and it put an end to further litigation.

If I may venture to say so, I think that the lawyer's argument as senator was less weighty than the lawyer's decision as judge. That decision settled the *legal right*, and on legal grounds other similar decisions probably would have succeeded; but other and higher considerations bear on the point. Suppose the bill had not passed, that the courts had still been open to orthodox suitors, and that consequently one chapel after another had been wrested from Unitarians, would consequences, in the shape of increased bitterness, in the shape of deepened prejudices against evangelical truths, in the shape of religious

¹ Debate on the Dissenters' Chapel Bill in the House of Lords, May 3rd, 1844.

scandals, employed as themes for infidel scoffs,—would all these have been counterbalanced by any increase, however great, of trust property for orthodox purposes? Would not the acquisition of material property have been vastly more than balanced by the moral loss?

Scotch Presbyterianism flourished in London, under the ministry of Dr. Cumming in Crown Court, and the ministry of Dr. Hamilton in Regent's Square. A large congregation assembled in each of these places, the former representing the Established, the latter the Free Church of Scotland. Both these clergymen were popular authors, as well as popular preachers. All who knew James Hamilton could testify to the sweetness of his disposition, the purity of his character, the warmth of his devotion, and his fervent and tender love to the Lord and Saviour. But far beyond the limits of personal acquaintanceship, his intellectual and spiritual influence made itself felt in the proceedings of the Evangelical Alliance, of which he was a distinguished member and advocate—in congregations other than his own, where he found large and sympathetic audiences,—but especially amongst the reading public, by whom his pictorial illustrations, devotional ardour, pathetic sentiments, and quaint diction were highly appreciated.

Of the modern Presbyterian Church in England, the following account is given by Dr. M'Crie :

"The spiritual torpor which had settled down on the Churches in England, as elsewhere, during the last century, began, about the third decade of the present, to spring into

new life ; and the ancient Presbyterians of England extended the right hand of fellowship to their Scottish brethren, who, though residing across the border, still adhered to the Westminster standards, and claimed ecclesiastical connexion with their native country. Hence the constitution of the present Presbyterian Churches in England. Some of these are in fellowship with the United Presbyterian Church, others with the Established Church of Scotland. Another party, however, having sympathised with the Scottish Church in her struggles for spiritual independence, formed itself, in 1844, into a Church in sisterly communion with the Free Church of Scotland, but with an independent jurisdiction of its own, under the denomination of 'The Presbyterian Church in England.' It deserves to be noticed that no sooner did it assume this independent position, no sooner was the official ligature with Scotland severed, than it sprang into new life ; it ceased to be regarded, as it had previously been, in the light of a colonial or foreign Church ; and in conjunction with other Churches tracing their constitution in common to the Westminster Assembly, it promises to become in a few years a worthy scion and genuine representative of the ancient Presbyterian Church of England. The total number of English Presbyterian Churches adhering to the Westminster Standards amounted, in the year 1873, to upwards of two hundred and fifty." 1

Amongst the United Presbyterian ministers of London were Dr. Young and Dr. Archer. The former was pastor at Albion Chapel, Moorfields, now pulled down. He attracted attention as early as 1836 by a course of lectures on "The Chief Points in Controversy between Protestants and Roman Catho-

¹ *Annals of English Presbytery*, p. 318.

lics," and shared a measure of London popularity; but his health broke down, and he sought retirement. Residing in Germany for some years, where he took up his abode for a time at Heidelberg, he devoted himself to the study of Teutonic metaphysics, criticism, and divinity, and for the rest of life relinquished the pulpit for the study, seeking to establish certain fundamental truths of the gospel. Differing from his brethren on some points, he produced, in his *Christ of History*, an argument in support of our Lord's Divine nature, founded upon the facts of His life on earth. *The Mystery of Evil and Good* followed soon afterwards, and this book was pronounced by Sir William Hamilton "one of the best and most satisfactory on the subject." *The Province of Reason* is of later date, containing a criticism of Mansel's Bampton Lecture. He resided in England for a considerable period before his death, known personally to a limited circle, and instinctively shrinking from public notice, except through the press.

Dr. Archer lived as much in public as his brother minister lived in private. The pulpit or the platform, rather than the pen, was the instrument he loved to employ in religious service. A copious and impassioned speaker, he was much in request by societies, and in Exeter Hall he felt quite at home. A zealous Protestant, he liked to attack Popery, and lectures on the subject from his fervid lips elicited loud applause. He made himself a pleasant companion, and gathered round him an attached Scotch congregation at an old fashioned meeting-house in Oxendon Street, Haymarket, now pulled down—a

building erected for the use of Richard Baxter, near the back of Secretary Coventry's garden wall.

Free Churches of the later period come too near our own time to furnish any of those points of archaic interest which, under the title of "manners and customs," have an almost fascinating effect on modern readers. The habits of Dissenting society in the middle of this century are familiar enough perhaps to the majority of persons into whose hands this book may fall; but it may not be superfluous to remark, that after the great political and commercial advances in this country, which commenced with the passing of the Reform Bill, a visible change in social position came over a number of Nonconformists. They did not take the place of certain aristocratic predecessors of Commonwealth and later times; they did not become large landed proprietors, like the heads of old county families: but by their industrial activity, in some of the northern cities and towns especially, they entered the ranks of that new order, now familiarly known by the name of cotton lords. They acquired wealth, and wealth gave them a distinction which they had not inherited. At the same time, in different parts of the country, a number of individuals of a similar class attained to eminence amongst their fellow citizens. Municipal and political influence followed. Dissenting members multiplied in civic corporations, they increased in electioneering activity, and one after another entered the House of Commons. In a few instances they received titles of honour beyond those which are the mere accompaniments of office. Undoubtedly they began to be a power in the State,

beyond what was thought of forty years before ; and after the wealth and elevation secured in this and other ways there doubtless followed some revolution in old nonconformist habits of extreme simplicity, and the lines began to fade which had once marked out their formal separation from the world. I can remember many of the richer men in Congregational and other Churches who could, without affectation, adopt the modest words of the Shunammite, " I dwell among my own people " ; but such instances have become rarer by degrees. Increased intercourse with people outside their own circles has had a manifest effect in this respect amongst the rest, that perhaps the *sectarianism* with which Dissenters were reproached—and which was largely the result of their being regarded, not simply as a *section* or a party of the great community of Christians, but as a schismatical sect, cutting themselves off from fellowship with their brethren—has somewhat diminished, and is melting away under the influence of wider social sympathies.

This is not the place to dwell upon the fact, that on these and other accounts Nonconformity is becoming a factor in the State, as it did not appear to be two or three generations ago ; and there can be no doubt that it is destined to have a yet larger share in shaping the future destinies of England. The hope is, that, unembittered by remembrances of old strifes, different Christian denominations will cultivate the reciprocities of brotherly intercourse and of co-operation in common work for promoting genuine religious and moral interests at home and abroad.

CHAPTER XVI.

METHODIST CONTROVERSIES.

1837-1850.

WESLEYAN METHODISM in 1837 presented aspects dark and bright. Thick clouds encompassed rays of sunshine. A quarterly fast-day was made special, to promote humiliation on account of decreased numbers, owing to the existence of strife and division. People met, with deep seriousness, and sought an outpouring of the Holy Spirit; about the same time clouds "of distrust and apathy, arising out of the discords, excitement, and turbulence of agitation, seemed to break, and showers of blessing descended on a few spots. . . . There was a great and general attendance on Divine worship, and enlarged congregations called for extended chapel accommodation. . . . Week after week the columns of Wesleyan intelligence were crowded with chapel erections and chapel enlargement in almost every part of the connexion."¹

The main event in this period of Methodist history was the Centenary celebration of 1839, arranged in commemoration of the founder's work; and it was

¹ Smith's *History*, vol. iii. p. 337. Such are the facts related by this Methodist historian.

employed as a season for effort according to a characteristic Methodist conviction, that sentiment should find expression in deeds and gifts. It was resolved to raise a fund worthy of the occasion, a new theological institution and new missionary premises being suggested as objects to be kept in view. They could not do what was done at the Baptist missionary jubilee, to be hereafter described. No spot like that at Kettering, no date like that of the day when Baptists met there in "the back parlour," guided Wesleyans as to the place and period of gathering; so they multiplied centres, and really multiplied seasons. A large committee assembled at Manchester, and afterwards central meetings were held in Liverpool, London, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Hull, Newcastle, and Dublin. In November they began in the great Lancashire port of England, and the next month an extraordinary gathering was seen in London; extraordinary in two respects—first, that it lasted from ten in the morning till eventide, and next, that it became an occasion for honouring the holy dead by offerings connected with their names, for one gave a donation in memory of a departed friend and a second, "as one that mourned for his mother." Other gifts were laid on the altar in like solemn ways. The assembly came to "Mount Zion, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." To follow these convocations from town to town is impossible. It is enough to quote the words of one who attended them.

"But the Centenary movement did not terminate here.

These meetings, as centres of great divisions of the country, undoubtedly kindled a flame in the hearts of leading members, whose means enabled them to travel the requisite distance to attend them. It was yet to be ascertained whether the less opulent of the middle and poorer classes would, in their own localities, enter into the same spirit, and follow the example of their more wealthy brethren. They did so almost universally, and with equal, if not intenser, feeling and liberality. We attended some of the most important divisional meetings, heard our most wealthy men announce their princely donations, and never so admired many of them as on these occasions. Never have we seen the rich man more fully lost in the manifestation of Christian character. Christian humility, deepest gratitude, simple and unaffected liberality were the prominent features which called forth admiration. Yet in many a circuit meeting, in remote and unmentioned localities, we saw poor men, presenting their sovereign or their five shillings, display as much intelligent feeling and grateful love, while a big tear trickled over their faces, and the suppressed exclamation was just audible, ‘What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits?’ And when it is considered that the ten principal meetings were succeeded by above 430 circuit meetings, ranging over the whole of Great Britain and Ireland, some conception may be formed of the amount of religious and connexional influence exerted in the country.”

At the Conference in 1839 a Centenary sermon was preached by the ex-president. The discourse occupied nearly three hours, but was “heard with unbroken attention and overpowering interest.” A Centenary Hall and Mission House in Bishopsgate Street was the first memorial structure paid for out of the money raised, and in January, 1841, the premises were opened by solemn services. Then

followed the building and consecration of an Institute at Didsbury for educating ministerial candidates. In September, 1843, there followed the completion of another edifice for a similar purpose on a spot adjoining Richmond Park.

The money raised at this celebration exceeded £230,000 ; and when the Centenary buildings, the Missionary society, and the Theological institutions had been provided for, enough remained to assist other objects, including the extinction of chapel debts, the promotion of Wesleyan education, and the provision of a fund for the relief of worn out preachers. It did honour to the catholic spirit of the conference, that the sum of £1000 was set apart for the British and Foreign Bible Society. The cohesion and elaborate machinery of Methodism, after the shock it had received from passing controversies, enabled the Connexion on this, as on subsequent occasions, to achieve what perhaps no other body of Christians, with the same means and under the same circumstances, would have ventured to attempt. Outsiders will blame Wesleyanism for its minute and inflexible legislation and discipline, and these may appear anything but attractive to members of other denominations ; but there is no denying that Methodists understand their own affairs better than other people do, and that the powers of control and inspiration possessed by the society have much to do with the extraordinary combined efforts put forth on this and other similar occasions.

Taking a stand in the year 1843, and looking back to the year 1816, when the cause took a fresh start

in its missionary race, we are struck with its progress during the interval. The number of members, at the beginning, was in Great Britain 191,680, in Ireland 28,542, and in mission fields 21,097 ; at the end, in Great Britain 331,024, in Ireland 28,004, and abroad 92,258. The reduction in Ireland is accounted for by secessions amounting to one third of the whole body, a circumstance which originated in controversies on the subject of sacraments. The agitation in England had diminished the increase.

Notwithstanding all which had happened, the increase in Great Britain amounted to no less than 139,344 ; missionary augmentation went so far as to reach 71,161. The total advance is stated as being 209,967. Soon after the Centenary excitements, an extraordinary man passed away. The name of William, or as he was commonly called, "Billy," Dawson had become amongst Methodists, for some time before, a household word. At the distance of forty years he will come back to a few, in distinct form—a burly Yorkshireman of middle height, broad shouldered, with a good-humoured countenance, wearing a scratch wig, which he had an odd knack of adjusting afresh every few minutes, and uttering what he had to say in a voice of power and compass. One of nature's orators, never having studied Quintilian, rough and ready, his imagination controlling rather than controlled, not of fastidious taste, and altogether a person of that class which seems spoiled by culture, he wonderfully impressed educated as well as uneducated people. There would sometimes be a dramatic touch in his method, as when, after

tearing a notice paper in pieces and scattering them round the pulpit, he announced a hymn, "Give to the wind thy fears," etc. The voice, the attitude, the manner of the man were such as those who did not know him are unable to understand ; but the whole remains indelibly impressed on the memories of some in their old age. He was only, as it is called, a "local preacher," yet he was as popular as any itinerant.

Methodists at the Centenary period had a clear sky overhead ; soon the clouds returned after the rain. For though peace prevailed in Conference, agitation went on outside. A newspaper criticised certain distinguished leaders ; and attacks, printed on fly sheets, issued from a source enveloped in mystery. The circumstance could not but irritate. Who were the authors ? what should be done ? At the Centenary celebration, James Everett, a noted preacher had, with intense ardour, expressed his attachment to Methodism ; notwithstanding, suspicion lighted on him now. In the Conference of 1849 the usual question was proposed, "Are there any objections against any of the preachers ?" and the President referred to mutual confidence and good-will as essential to the welfare of the connexion. Some one alluded to "the fly sheets," when the suspected preacher just noticed was named, and with him another. They were sent for, and asked whether they were authors, wholly or in part, of the censured publications ? They declined to answer. A committee, appointed to examine the matter, recommended the expulsion of one and the suspension of the other. Two more were also ex-

communicated. Such proceedings are out of harmony with ordinary ideas. That accused persons should be asked to criminate themselves is opposed to English law and practice, and is intolerable in English society. But Methodism has laws of its own. It constitutes *a sort of family*, for the existence of which more than usual confidence is requisite. Questions, it is said, may be asked in a household not admissible elsewhere. Such kind of discipline was exercised now, and supported by a large majority. "The Conference almost unanimously adopted the recommendation of the committee."¹ How far this policy was wise is a question which will probably now be viewed by many Methodists differently from what it was then. Certainly their ministers as a body are self-sacrificing to an extreme, especially in the surrender of personal liberty; and whatever may be thought of them in other respects, their generosity and absorption in promoting a common end cannot be denied. Here is the secret of their singular efficiency, and it has been said, that any one who is prepared to make such a surrender as they have done must abide by it, and pay a penalty arising from the occurrence of unpleasant circumstances. Many men could not conscientiously make such a surrender, and surely all must admit that in the case now described a strain was put upon human nature beyond common endurance, and what followed is not surprising.

Those expelled, still attached to Methodism, made, as many had done before, attempts to effect an

¹ Smith's *History*, vol. iii. p. 464.

organic change by diminishing the power which existed in a few hands, and by increasing the influence of the lay element. This naturally excited sympathy in other denominations where the lay element was strong. They pronounced an unfavourable judgment on the Conference, and aided the expelled in their appeal to public opinion. A principle, no doubt, and a very important one, was involved in the controversy; but personalities were very conspicuous. Criticism of the characters of certain men originated the dispute; and counter-criticism of the character, temper, and spirit of the critics themselves, followed of course. Things were said and done by those cut off from the old-fellowship, as well as by those who were authors of the excision, not to be justified by impartial observers; and in some cases there was an eager readiness, on the part of non-Methodists, to plunge into a warfare which properly did not belong to them. At all events, seceders organised themselves under the name of *Methodist Reformers*, and occupied common ground with those who had earlier separated, and taken the title of the "New Methodist Association." Both insisted on lay influence as a counterpoise to what they deemed ministerial despotism. Under such circumstances, a continuance of two distinct bodies appeared undesirable; and after a time steps were taken for amalgamating them under the title of "United Methodist Free Churches."¹ It was not carried into

¹ A deed of reference was executed in 1865 for the settlement of chapels belonging to the "Reformers" on the same

effect until 1857, a date beyond the reach of this chapter. Happily, wounds made at the time have been much mollified, if not perfectly healed ; and after the fraternal proceedings of the great Methodist Convention a few years ago, it would be a sad pity to open old sores. It is not to be supposed that amidst connexional strifes unanimity was untouched among remaining members, but some did not share in personal resentments felt by others. An example of beautiful charitableness must not be passed by. William Bunting, son of the famous Jabez, was a person of rare individuality. Once seen, he seemed not likely to be forgotten. “ He made you think of the risen Lazarus walking pensively from his first to his second sepulchre,” for he was thin like a skeleton and pale like a corpse, whilst an ethereal refinement marked his every mien, and made you feel as if you had come in contact with one belonging to another world. His brother, who has painted a striking picture of him, thus describes his relation to the fly sheet controversy.

“ Reverencing my father’s opinions, though with none of his reforming tendencies, approving generally his ecclesiastical policy, yet he often broke a lance with him. His loyalty to his leader tempted him sometimes, by a reaction which can easily be understood, to needless displays of inde-

trusts as had been laid down in the foundation deed of the “ Association.” I have been furnished with a copy by my beloved friend, W. H. Cozens Hardy, Esq., of Letheringsett Hall, Norfolk, who identified himself with the movement, and contributed largely to its success. The United Methodist Free Churches have taken a good position in English Christendom.

pendence." . . . "A fair estimate of the motives and character of his antagonists was always manifest, and if there were among the ranks of the Methodist ministry good and able men who systematically opposed the views to which his father's son had committed himself,—those were the men to whom he always abounded in expressions of respect and in demonstrations of friendship. He ran, as by instinct, to the rescue of any brother to whom popular caprice or the infirmities of ecclesiastical tribunals appeared to him to be in danger of doing wrong; undertook chivalrously many hopeless cases, and, as it seemed to some of us, occasionally lost an intense and all-sacrificing sense of what was due to the whole body in his too favourable construction of the acts of individuals." Dismissals in the case of those whom he had known and honoured were too painful for him. "He never abandoned these desolate ones; he clung to the hope that some more favourable, perhaps some counterbalancing, disclosures might be made, at all events at the great day: meanwhile he comforted and counselled as best he could."¹

In the Methodist atmosphere of that day this was thought by some to be going very far. Possibly now some would go farther still. Conscientious convictions often run along different lines, and opinions true and right may blend with feelings false and wrong; and, looking beyond Methodism, let me add respecting this honoured friend, in words employed by his brother, "He learned from men who had thought things out, each in his own way, what were the real differences among Christians: how a little explanation here, a mode of illustration there, enlargement

¹ *Memorials of the late Rev. W. M. Bunting*, pp. 41, 42.

of heart anywhere, bridges over seas of disputation, diminishes distance, scatters mists, and makes clear the only way to heaven.”¹

The “New Connexion Methodists” celebrated their jubilee in 1846, when “the deed poll” was placed before Conference in a new and complete form, giving a legal identity to the body “in the persons of twenty-four guardian representatives, twelve ministers and twelve laymen.” The newest Wesleyan organizations, as well as the oldest, provided carefully for cohesion of parts no less than for the supremacy of Conferential law; and the practical problem wrought out by the younger bodies was, how the lay can co-operate with the clerical element in maintaining a definite ecclesiastical order. The New Connexion had 20,000 members at the time of the jubilee, and the Conference resolved to raise the sum of £20,000 for the liquidation of chapel debts, the education of preachers, the assistance of retired ministers, and various missionary purposes.

The Primitive Methodists, with characteristic enthusiasm and energy, during the period to which the chapter relates, pursued their work, not only in rural districts, but in large towns. Old circuits were extended, and new ones marked out; at the same time missions in all directions were attempted, many a case appearing to others, though not to them, as a forlorn hope. The open air, the country common, the town cross, the city street were chosen places of worship, or rather, preferred positions for holding

¹ *Memorials of the late Rev. W. M. Bunting*, p. 38.

forth the "word of life to a crooked and perverse nation." Walking in procession and singing hymns were means of attracting public notice; and this course of proceeding in other respects, though it might be adapted to vulgar minds, shocked and repelled people of refinement. These Methodists were obnoxious to all High Churchmen, who cast a longing look upon mediæval times, when Christendom was untroubled by upstart sects as in the nineteenth century. Yet the Primitives, in their very irregular movements, drawing people from parish churches to wayside pulpits, and gathering them into societies of their own, were so far, only walking in the footsteps of thirteenth-century Friars, who inspired the dislike of the regular priesthood and steady-going monastic orders. Neither the offenders nor the offended, however, thought of this parallel, nor did it occur to them that revivals, in their noisy demonstrations, had been anticipated by proceedings before the Reformation in Italy and elsewhere. After all, who that knows what human nature is, and how wonderfully the Holy Spirit works amidst much that is discordant, will doubt that where the Gospel is faithfully proclaimed, even by erratic messengers, it proves the power of God unto salvation?

The Primitives were still cruelly persecuted. Their extravagances offended many. One page after another of their history details sufferings, not only at the hands of ruffians, but at the hands of those from whom better conduct might have been expected. The mob pelted and drove away the preachers, as if they had been wild beasts, and employers and

landlords threatened the hearers with dismissal from work and with notices to quit. Sad details are abundant. In 1843, in a midland town, some preachers held a short service in a back street, and announced an intention to speak in the market-place the same day. As soon as one of them began he had rotten eggs flung in his face, and where he attempted to find shelter dirty water was poured over his head. Then followed other excesses which seem incredible. But spiritual effects were produced, cheering the hearts of victims. Two farmers, parish officers, being sent on one occasion to forbid an open air sermon, thought it best to listen before they interfered. They did listen, and were converted.¹ It was common in the early Church to interpret calamities befalling persecutors as judgments executed by Divine Providence. The habit is seen in mediaeval writers, in histories of the Reformation, and in books by the Puritans. Hence no one should wonder that Methodists regarded those who troubled them as visited by righteous judgments from God.

The Primitive Connexion passed beyond Great Britain. It touched Ireland. It won victories in Canada and the United States. It reached as far as Australia and New Zealand, and cheering reports were communicated to the English conference. In 1847 a Primitive Methodist conference was held in the state of Illinois. Statistics from 1840 to 1850 show a large increase. In the first of these years 495 travelling and 6860 local preachers are reported,

¹ Petty's *History*, p. 446.

with 79,967 members. In the second, we find 519 travelling and 8524 local preachers, with 104,762 members.

Of old Calvinistic Methodists, the principal representatives appeared in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. Surrey Chapel, after Rowland Hill's death, though it had never been identified with that body, remained Calvinistic Methodist, and received as minister James Sherman, one of the Countess' ministers. He had fulfilled a successful career at Reading, and had gathered round him there a large number of Church people. He was an exceedingly evangelical preacher, with a pleasant voice and a wonderful aptitude for producing popular impression. In his youth he had been noticed by Hannah More, and had received overtures to enter the Established Church, which he could not conscientiously accept. He used the Book of Common Prayer, which he read in a surplice from the reading desk; but on resigning his connexion with Surrey Chapel he accepted a call to an Independent pastorate at Blackheath—a circumstance which shows how thin, and how easily broken through, was the partition between the "Countess' Connexion" and the Congregationalists.

Spa Fields remained loyal to her ladyship. It belonged to the Connexional trust, and retained the Church service with slight modifications; and at Brighton a noted chapel bore the Countess' name, under charge of Joseph Sortain, a man as devout as he was accomplished, and as evangelical in doctrine as he was catholic in spirit. The Vineyards

at Bath, where Horace Walpole heard Wesley, had been a favourite spot with the memorable Selina, and it is still used for sacred offices such as she approved.

CHAPTER XVII.

QUAKERISM AND MORAVIANISM.

1837-1850.

THOSE who have the deepest conviction of the Holy Spirit's presence, and who love to wait on Him for gracious teaching, are sometimes called Quietists. This name was given in particular to certain persons in Spain and France, who, at the close of the seventeenth century, were distinguished by a *quiet* spiritual attitude. It may appropriately be applied to a general group of religionists in England, composed of those who, differing from each other in some respects, more or less agree in the cultivation of this state of feeling. It is applicable to them on a further account, that in times of public agitation they keep themselves restful—not sharing in public strife, but remaining as lakes in sheltered spots, screened by mountains and forests, and scarcely touched by winds which lash into tumultuous waves the surface of broader waters.

We have, in the present chapter, again to notice two denominations, to both of which these remarks apply. First take the Quakers. It was to be expected that the Hicksite controversy would attract the attention of theologians outside the society. There

is no denying that an immense prejudice existed against George Fox and his followers in the seventeenth century. It afterwards diminished, but it did not cease. It lingered down to the last two or three generations, and public opinion in reference to the body and its principles was very different from what it is now. Owing to an idea that the basis of this denomination is unsound—a conviction increased by dislike to all mystical forms of thought—there were good men fifty years ago who made an attack, not upon its external peculiarities, but upon its fundamental principle—that of “the inner light.” “It is not easy,” says Mr. Maurice, in his letter addressed to a member of the society, “to imagine two sets of men more contrasted in their opinions and habits of thought than the members of your sect and the old Scotch Calvinists.”¹ The contrast continued till our own times; perhaps it continues to this day. At any rate, a strong, though not an unkind feeling existed in reference to Quakerism at the epoch of the Hicksite controversy; and an attempt was made on the north side of the Tweed to show that “the inward light” notion proceeded from another notion, latent it might be, of Scripture being insufficient. Scripture needed something beyond itself. That idea was attributed to the Friends; and so a parallel was suggested, strange as it may appear, between them and Roman Catholics.² Roman Catholics employed

¹ *Kingdom of Christ*, vol. iii. p. 277.

² See Dr. Wardlaw’s *Friendly Letters to the Society of Friends*, 1830.

tradition as a supplement to the Bible ; Quakers the "inward light." This supposed resemblance was deemed illustrative of the way in which extremes meet. There was, at the side of this suspicion, another, namely, that Quakerism is Christianity shrouded in mystical Deism, and struggling with it like a lamp in a vapoury atmosphere.¹ This last might be true of the Hicksite theory, but certainly it is not true of acknowledged English Quakerism. Friends in this country protest against anything like Deism ; and as to *mysticism*—a word very often carelessly used—that really means a habit of looking, whether through the medium of wild imagination or calm reason, at things intuitively, instead of *logically*: it is a mere accident whether it be connected with error or not. Thus criticised in different ways, the society passed through a severe ordeal ; but in patience the good people possessed their souls. An able work, however, in its defence, explanatory rather than controversial, had been written as early as 1824 by Joseph John Gurney, entitled *Observations on the Religious Peculiarities of the Society of Friends*. He and others could employ argument as well as intuition, and could also appeal to Quaker declarations of orthodoxy on primary questions in relation to which they were supposed to be heterodox.

The fact could not be concealed that the number of Friends was on the decline. "My attention," says Mr. Forster in 1836, "has been attracted to the state of some of our small meetings ; and tender feelings

¹ See *Josiah Conder, a Memoir*, p. 307.

have been awakened for those who may dwell under the feeling of their disadvantages and those of their children. From not having the benefit of much instrumental means, some may draw a contrast between their circumstances and those of other religious professions, and so be cast down. It is a fact that many of our meetings are very small, and they may be still smaller, and be held from month to month in silence.¹ After all, though it be true that "speech is silvern and silence is golden," people want a good deal of silvern speech in order that they may estimate the gold of silence. Silent meetings from week to week are apt to lose the spirit of worship, except where, as in the case of some of the grand old Quakers, spiritual life has reached the highest pitch of vigour. It was unlikely that young minds, superficial and volatile, should feel much interest in exercises requiring deep reflection; so Quakerism lost ground. Yet another thing imperilled its prosperity. The young were drawn away to other places of worship, where there was something to be heard, where eloquent voices proclaimed truth or the contrary, and the service of song filled the house of the Lord; and it is to be feared that worldly attractions, that gay amusements, that snares, against which yearly epistles too often vainly warned, caught and entangled these young spirits, and kept them from persevering in paths beside "the still waters." But Quakerism lost not its faith and hope. "Upon the whole," says Mr. Forster at a later period, "as to the

¹ *Memoirs of William Forster.* By B. Seebohm, vol. ii. p. 110.

stability of the society, and the testimonies which have been laid upon Friends to the spirituality of the Christian religion, I am cheered and in good heart. Our numbers may be diminished, and much more so than we could at one time have anticipated; and yet the object for which the society was brought into existence may be answered, both in this and the future generations of the Church."¹

There are sufficient proofs that the heart of English Quakerism remained sound in a belief of the essential doctrines of Christianity, but a suspicion existed that all was not right with the body of Friends, and that some special means needed to be employed as a defence against the irruption of American heresy. So strong was this feeling that, on account of a lax policy being followed, thirty resignations of membership were sent in to a monthly meeting in 1836. Those who resigned felt that something more was required for their edification and comfort than they found in existing provisions, that a more bold and distinct testimony to evangelical truths was called for, and they asked for changes in accordance with these sentiments. I speak from personal acquaintance with some excellent men and women in the north of England, whose minds were deeply affected at that time by a conviction that matters were not as they should be; and failing to find what they wanted in the society to which from infancy they had belonged, they began to seek it in other communions. Of course this awakened concern in their old friends, and

¹ *Memoirs of William Forster*, vol. ii. p. 114.

it found expression in a report to a monthly meeting, prepared by a committee of which William Forster was a member. "We do wholly and distinctly deny the justice of that imputation, which in various forms has been cast upon our religious society, as if it undervalued the blessed message of reconciliation through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one great sacrifice for the sins of all mankind, and instead thereof insisted, in an inclusive and therefore in a false and unscriptural manner, upon the doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit for our salvation."¹

Mr. Forster was still one of the main pillars of orthodoxy, and he continued to labour as a preacher and also in the support of philanthropic schemes. He had visited America before, and it was whilst fulfilling his last mission to that country, with an address to the president and governors of the States on the subject of abolition, that in 1854 he died, somewhat suddenly, in Blount County, Tennessee, where he is buried. He may be said to have sacrificed his life to the emancipation of slaves in the United States, after having devoted years at home to the emancipation of slaves in our own dominions. His preaching was widely acceptable, being remarkable for its profound insight into Divine truth and Christian experience; and it is expressive of this and of the peculiar language current in his own circle, to cite the remark of one who, having heard him in a large assembly, said, "The waters were deep enough for William Forster to swim in."²

¹ *Memoir of Forster*, vol. ii. p. 105. ² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 377.

His brother Josiah, also a public Friend, who was with him at the time of his death, threw all his energies into the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and might be seen in very old age, fortnight by fortnight, at the meetings of the committee at Earl's Street, Blackfriars, where, as a sage counsellor, his presence to the last was valued by every member.

Joseph John Gurney was another ornament of the society, devoted from his youth to the cause of the Bible, the emancipation of the slave, the education of the poor, and the peace of the world. No Quaker perhaps since William Penn, whom in character he somewhat resembled,¹ was so distinguished by scholarship and social intercourse beyond the circle of his own sect. He had a university education, and made literature an employment throughout life. He was the author of several books which attracted general attention; and his calm and beautiful home at Earlham, near Norwich, was the resort of the wise and good of all denominations and of all ranks. The Nobleman, the Bishop, the Dissenting minister might be seen at his table, and a gathering at that hospitable spot during the week of the Norwich Bible meetings was the great religious festival of the county. Dr. Chalmers, on one occasion, met Bishop Bathurst there, and they were charmed with each other, as they talked of Atterbury, Warburton, Adam Smith, and David Hume, celebrities about whom the bishop had many anecdotes to tell, in

¹ Dean Stanley used to speak of this resemblance in his own peculiar way.

which the Quaker host took the liveliest interest. There Chalmers, in 1833, met Mrs. Opie.

"It was curious to myself," he says in his journal, "that though told by Mr. Gurney in the morning of her being to dine, I had forgot the circumstance, and the idea of the accomplished novelist and poet was never once suggested by the image of this plain looking Quakeress, till it rushed upon me after dinner, when it suddenly and inconceivably augmented the interest I felt in her. We had much conversation, and drew greatly together, walking and talking with each other on the beautiful lawn after dinner. She has had access into all kinds of society, and her conversation is all the more rich and interesting. I complained to her of one thing in Quakerism, and that is the mode of their introduction ; that I could have recognised in Mrs. Opie an acquaintance of thirty years' standing, but that I did not, and could not, feel the charm of any such reminiscences when *Joseph John* simply bade me lead out *Amelia* from his drawing-room to his dining-room."¹

This is a pleasant glance at the recesses of Quaker life, and those who have had some personal experience of it can testify that amongst the homes of England, for refinement and intelligence, combined with simplicity, none could surpass those of the Friends fifty or sixty years ago.

If Joseph John Gurney was a good specimen of the scholar and the gentleman, his brother Samuel was an equally good specimen of the merchant prince and open-handed benefactor. "It was a remarkable sight to witness the head of the firm of Overend &

¹ *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. ii. p. 311.

Co. plunged day by day into the vortex of city business, and returning thence to his domestic hearth without any trace of a mammon-loving spirit.”¹ Avaricious, certainly he was not; but there were times of trouble in Lombard Street, when Samuel Gurney felt what responsibilities were lying on his shoulders, and once, in the course of a monetary panic, he spent the whole night pacing his chamber unable to rest.² Children from Stratford and Bow enjoying a school treat at Ham House, found by experience that the owner was no churlish, inhospitable millionaire, but an old English gentleman; and those who applied to him for all manner of subscriptions, found him ready to do good and willing to communicate. With his sister, Mrs. Fry, one of the queenliest of women that ever lived, he was in full accord, helping her in her objects and accompanying her in her prison visits. Never to be forgotten was an entertainment he gave to the officers of the Niger expedition, in which he took a deep interest; when, after dinner, he gathered the notabilities in the drawing-room and read a chapter in the New Testament, Mrs. Fry giving an address and closing the interview with a short prayer.

Before 1850 lines of demarcation between Quaker and other forms of religion became increasingly faint, yet not so faint as they are now. Knowledge and refinement, in certain circles, attracted the acquaintance and friendship of persons outside. Families in

¹ *Memorials of Samuel Gurney.* By Mrs. Geldart, p. 28.

² This I was told by a near relative of his forty years ago.

different parts of the country lost the exclusive habits of earlier days. A common cultivation of scientific pursuits contributed to this result, notably in the case of Mr. Fox and his remarkable daughter Caroline, whose Journal, lately published, opens up scenes and conversations of a charming description. She was scarcely a typical Friend, though she remained until her death a member of the society. She wrote in 1846: "I have assumed a name to-day for my religious principles, Quaker Catholicism, having direct spiritual teaching for its distinctive dogma, yet recognizing the high worth of all other forms of faith; a system in the sense of inclusion, not exclusion, an appreciation of the universal and various teachings of the Spirit through the faculties given us or independent of them."¹ This confession of faith would not have satisfied William Forster, and might have been adopted by Hicksites; but I am not aware that this excellent lady had any sympathy with the latter. I find no reference to their views in her journals or letters.

A second class of English Quietists was composed

¹ *Caroline Fox, her Journals and Letters*, vol. ii. p. 52. In these volumes there are very numerous references to Sterling. "His friendship with her and her family is a strange illustration of that mingling of principles and ideas which was perhaps the chief characteristic of the generation to which these journals belong. The hard lines which had divided schools of thought were passing away, notwithstanding their apparent sharpening in passing struggles; and all but a few extreme spirits were learning to understand each other better, and approximating to each other more and more."—*Quarterly Review*, No. 360, p. 451.

of Moravians, who, though differing greatly from Quakers in creed and discipline, like them were few and retired, leading an unobserved life, not plunging into controversy, not ruffled by surrounding social storms. To turn from conflicts political and ecclesiastical, such as have been described in this volume, to look at what Moravians were doing, is to leave the battlefield for green pastures, where men and women worked hard in the service of Christ. Their records occupy small space in the religious history of England between 1830 and 1850. Indeed, there is scarcely any material for an account of their proceedings in this country.

Their old congregations, their old settlements, already enumerated, continued to exist, but they made little progress; I cannot discover more than three or four new organizations. Nor did any important constitutional changes occur. A general Synod was held in Germany in 1836, when indeed a radical spirit appeared; but little, however, became changed, save that the lot was made non-compulsory except in the case of appointments to the Episcopate. Another Synod in 1848, anticipated with some anxiety amidst continental revolutions, passed off in tranquillity, only reversing a new rule made in 1818. In 1838 the Moravians commenced a mission at the Cape of Good Hope among the Fingoes, a tribe which had escaped from Kafir slaveholders, and flocked into the colony as sheep having no shepherd. The mission established at Clarkson was a decided success. Subsequently two more stations were added in British Kafraria.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

1820-1850.

QUAKERISM was a reaction against formalism and worldliness. Moravianism, though historically different, and assuming the appearance of an old Episcopal *unitas fratrum*, was also a reaction against ecclesiastical and social disorders. There arose a third form of religious conviction and profession, bearing some resemblance to both the former, more especially the first. It came forward between the years 1820 and 1830, and slowly made its way into notice, amidst sharp criticism on the part of existing denominations. It assumed no distinctive name, but it soon came to be called *Brethrenism*, and from an early place of meeting, Plymouth Brethrenism.

There are somewhat varying explanations of its commencement. Perhaps the safest course is to unite accounts, which though distinct are not contradictory. About the middle of the period I have mentioned, a young man of ardent piety, named Groves, was studying in Trinity College, Dublin, for missionary work connected with the Episcopal Church. Circumstances arose which altered his purpose in refer-

ence to the ecclesiastical sphere of labour. He had doubts as to the propriety of studying general literature with a view to the ministry; he felt it right to give up his property as a sacrifice to the Lord, and in missionary labour to cast himself on Divine Providence; further, he altered his views on baptism, and was immersed; next, he resigned the thought of Episcopal ordination, partly because of the terms of subscription, still more because he held that every Christian, feeling a Divine call, had a right to preach the gospel without any human appointment, also that believers in Christ should frequently meet together to break bread independently of any clerical ministration. Accordingly, he met some friends in Dublin for that purpose, and, as stated in another account, "four Christian men," in the winter of 1827-8, came together in like manner, but Mr. Groves' name is not included. They had studied the Scriptures together, and had convinced themselves that all existing ecclesiastical systems were wrong, that Christendom was in confusion, and that the day of the Lord was at hand—prophecy was their favourite study. Mr. Darby, one of the "four Christian men" who met in the city of Dublin, published, in 1828, a tract on "the nature and unity of the Church of Christ," in which he deprecated "a formal union of the outward professing bodies," which would prove but a "counterpart to Romish unity." He conceived that to seek the interest of any particular denomination was inimical to the Spirit of God, and that all believers were to be embraced on the basis of Christ's one kingdom. The last sentiment bore a catholic

appearance; but when closely examined in the light of connected proceedings, it really meant the unchurching of all ecclesiastical communities whatever, and the rupture of every denominational tie. What had been built up in past ages was to be pulled down, and an indefinite visionary Christian republic was to rise over the ruins.

Mr. Groves' views were really catholic, which Mr. Darby's were not. The former was prepared to unite with clergymen and nonconformists in the simple breaking of bread, and, without denouncing other communities, to promote union "among all who possess the common life of the family of God." He was no sectarian, but was prepared "to go in and out among God's people everywhere, both conveying and receiving refreshment."¹ Mr. Groves had the spirit of a martyr, and did a most wonderful missionary work in Persia and India.² The comprehensiveness of his principles, in contrast with the narrowness of those adopted by some of the Brethren, is expressed by him when he says: "I daily more and more desire to see raised up for God discriminating witnesses, discerning between things that differ, enduring the evil for the sake of the good, rather than fleeing from the good for the sake of the evil. I am so fixed in this principle, that I could never give it up, even were those I most love to oppose me in it."³

¹ *Memoir of the late A. N. Groves*, p. 39.

² See the story of what he did at Bagdad. *Memoir*, chaps. v., vi., vii.

³ *Memoir*, p. 376.

And again: "While we hope Christ lingers, let us linger; and rather be behind than before to quit, in pitiful remembrance of our own iniquities and unnumbered errors. So long as we judge Christ to be dwelling with a man, that is our warrant for receiving him, and for the charity of that judgment which declares Him not there, we are responsible."¹ As an ever-narrowing process was advancing amongst some of the Brethren, this excellent man was throwing out, far and wide, lines of charity and holding fellowship with members of all denominations. Archdeacon Corrie and Dr. Duff were his attached friends.

Mr. Darby was very different from Mr. Groves. The branch of the Brethren connected with the former, proceeding on strictly sectarian principles, drew numerous members from the Churches in the neighbourhood, and met for worship at first at a private house, after 1829 in a large auction room at Dublin. About 1831 a group gathered in Plymouth, and publicly meeting at Providence Chapel, of that town, they received the appellation of "Plymouth Brethren." A profession of unworldliness, the consecration of property to religious and beneficent uses, simplicity in dress and furniture, and the study of Scripture prophecy, appeared as their marked characteristics. Many persons who joined them at that time stripped themselves of jewellery and ornaments to fill the boxes at a collection;² not only the

¹ *Memoir*, p. 534.

² *Short Papers on Church History*, vol. iii. p. 657, written by a Plymouth Brother.

luxuries, but the common conveniences of domestic life were sacrificed ; homes lost the appearance of home, religion was made repulsive, and distressing prejudices against it were infused into the minds of young people.

It is difficult to receive, and therefore difficult to convey, a distinct conception of principles adopted by the Brethren, because they published no confession of faith, and issued no declaration of ecclesiastical order. They profess to take the New Testament as their rule, but this profession supplies no definite idea of their peculiarity, all Christian bodies saying the same. Their testimony appears to have been more negative than positive. They protested against worldliness ; they protested against Churchism ; they protested against Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, and Independency, esteeming them all to be wrong. The Establishment was an apostasy, and Dissent no better. The one was latitudinarian, the other schismatic. The Brethren's main positive manifesto is, that "the Lord is at hand," and that "the Holy Ghost is the present sole and sufficient Sovereign in the Church during our Lord's absence." Multitudes of Christians say much the same, though they cannot adopt the Brethren's notion of the second coming, nor give up Church government and discipline, which they believe to be essential to the preservation of religion.

No one can justly doubt the sincere piety of many who united in this movement. Their ultimate object was good. They sought to be "delivered from this present evil world" ; they longed to live in the Spirit

and to walk in the Spirit, but their reproaches, thickly scattered on all sides, presented a sectarian and repulsive character ; and the matter came to be aggravated when they differed amongst themselves, and some of them proceeded to excommunicate the others. Opinions resembling those of Irving as to the humanity of Christ made way in certain quarters, those who were orthodox being naturally shocked at so sad an occurrence. A teacher at Plymouth named Newton, some years after the period to which we are limited, took a leading part in the promulgation of objectionable opinions ; upon which Mr. Darby and his friends excommunicated him as a heretic—not only so, but they would not hold communion with any one who, though not sharing in his errors, continued in fellowship with those who did. They said that any one who came from a meeting where false doctrine was known to be held, contracted thereby a *taint*, though personally he might be quite sound ; and that where a single member of an heretical body is received, all other members are virtually received also. The idea of selectness in communion—no modern invention—went beyond the bounds of Novatians and Donatists in the fourth and fifth centuries, and all excesses of exclusion in modern times ; but in support of a policy of excision they quoted St. Paul's words to the Galatians, “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump ?” Nor were bonds of ecclesiastical recognition the only ones broken by this rule ; the common courtesies of life, I remember hearing at the time, were refused to those tainted by contact with heretical parties. Other companies,

however, received as Christians those who had not adopted condemned tenets, though they communed with those who had. Thus the Brethren became divided into three sections: the heretics; those who would have nothing to do with them or their friends; and those who received the latter, though not the former. In the census of 1851 it is stated that "the number of places of worship which the census officers in England returned as frequented by the Brethren was 134; but probably this number is below the truth, in consequence of the objection which they entertain to acknowledge any sectarian appellation."

CHAPTER XIX.

UNION.

1837-50.

CONTEMPORARY with the exclusiveness just described an intense craving after union appeared in different forms. One section of the High Church party longed for reconciliation between Rome and England; another looked in the direction of Oriental communions, and especially wished for fellowship with the Greeks; Evangelicals in the Establishment and among Dissenters sought for an alliance amongst themselves.

One of the first public steps¹ of this movement was taken by John Angell James, of Birmingham. He made a speech before the annual assembly of the Congregational Union in May, 1842. "Is it not in the power of this union," he asked, "to bring about, by God's blessing, a Protestant evangelical union of the whole body of Christ's faithful followers, who have at any rate adopted the voluntary principle?" These words expressed but a narrow idea, floating as

¹ "For twenty years the preparations were being quietly and surely made."—*Evangelical Alliance* (by Rev. J. Davis) : *Essays and Addresses at New York Conference, 1873*, p. 189.

a vision in the air. It was to be based, it seems, on the voluntary principle, though the speaker was, as he often said, prepared to embrace all Evangelicals within the arms of his Christian sympathy. In almost the next sentence he showed that he was thinking quite as much of union for *defence*, as of union for cultivating charity. "It appears to me that we have it in our power to raise up a defence against *infidelity, Popery, Puseyism, and Plymouth Brethrenism*, by bringing about a union of all Protestant bodies of Christians holding the voluntary principle." Plymouth Brethren were then beginning to awaken the apprehensions of Congregationalists and others, and hence it was numbered amongst forces against which the proposed combination was to be arrayed. This looked more like contention than alliance. Afterwards the excellent Birmingham pastor printed a sort of conspectus, unfolding more fully what he had conceived; and in it he laid down a basis of beliefs, still specifying Dissenters of different classes as eligible for admission, significantly adding, "Gladly would I see the Wesleyan body in such a union, and pious clergymen of the Churches of England and Scotland." There was timidity in this project, as well as misapprehension of the best means of promoting union. He again urged the matter, but in an uncontroversial form, upon the Congregational Union, the following autumn, at a meeting in Liverpool. Dr. Leifchild, on his own responsibility, invited several London ministers, including Dr. Hamilton, of the Scotch Church, Regent's Square, and Dr. Bunting, with his son William, to an assembly for prayer

and addresses on January 2nd, 1843. Mr. Latrobe, the Moravian, also joined them. Churchmen, Wesleyans, and Presbyterians, as well as Independents and Baptists, soon came forward. The idea which moved these brethren about the same time presented itself to other minds—a circumstance which has led to different accounts of what took place at the origin of the enterprise. The Rev. Alexander Keith, D.D., and the Rev. Ridley Herschell, it is said, "having returned from a visit to the Jews of Eastern Europe and Asia, and being on a visit to Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Bart., then residing at Torquay, were invited to give a public account of their mission and its results to the friends of the Jews in that place. A meeting for the purpose was fixed accordingly for January 27th, 1843. After the morning meeting many of the friends dined at Admiral Hope's house, and during the conversation the Rev. Gerard Smith remarked, 'Is not the time come for evangelical Christians to abandon their little denominational differences, and to unite *as one body* in withstanding their threefold enemy—infidelity, popery, and profanity?'" But this was a gathering subsequent to that in Craven Chapel. And here, again, the thought of something besides union distinctly reappears.

Two public meetings speedily followed that at Craven Chapel, one at Exeter Hall, in June, being crowded to excess, so "that people's clothes were in many cases torn from their backs"—an accidental occurrence not quite in harmony with the professed object. Resolutions were passed, but "no organism

was formed." In July, 1843, the bicentenary of the Westminster Assembly, celebrated at Edinburgh, helped forward the design; when Mr. Henderson offered a prize for the best essay on "Christian Union." In 1845 two successful essays were published. At an autumnal meeting of the Congregational Union at Leeds, in October, 1843, fresh resolutions, in favour of an alliance, were passed, and then followed a gathering at Liverpool where the contemplated institution attained an actual and definite form.

What had been accomplished at Liverpool amounted to the formation of an *English* alliance; but there were continental and American brethren desirous of joining in this sort of confederation; consequently a general conference of Anglo-Saxons and foreigners was arranged to be held in Freemasons' Hall, 1846. "The mountains of Switzerland, the valleys of France, the plains of Germany sent forth their choicest heralds," says one of the members in rather grandiloquent terms. A number of towns, which he enumerates, "were represented by these honoured sons and faithful leaders. The Rhine and the Elbe, the Danube, the Saone and the Seine poured in as tributaries, with the Hudson and the St. Lawrence, the Ohio and Mississippi, with African and Asiatic streams, to swell the confluent well of consecrated affection and wisdom." The conference described in this exuberant language was really large and remarkably representative. Above eight hundred were present, and they included evangelical Christians from almost all British and Irish denominations, and from

the Lutheran and reformed communities of France and Germany. They met under the inspiration of a common purpose; and after declaring that "the Church of the living God, while it admits of growth, is one Church, never having lost and being incapable of losing its essential unity," after deplored the divisions which exist in Christendom, they resolved upon forming an alliance. Thus far there was enthusiastic cordiality; but a test was applied to the temper of the assembly when the following doctrinal basis was read and recommended:

"That with a view, however, of furnishing the most satisfactory explanation, and guarding against misconception, in regard to their design and the means of its attainment, they deemed it expedient explicitly to state as follows:

"That the parties composing the Alliance shall be such persons only as hold and maintain what are usually understood to be evangelical views in regard to the matters of doctrine understated; viz.:

"1. The Divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.

"2. The unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of the Persons therein.

"3. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the Fall.

"4. The incarnation of the Son of God, His work of atonement for sinners of mankind, and His mediatorial intercession and reign.

"5. The justification of the sinner by faith alone.

"6. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner.

"7. The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

“8. The Divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the authority and perpetuity of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper.

“9. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked.”¹

The articles occasioned much discussion. To understand the difficulties, the mixed character of the meeting must be remembered. It comprised men, not only of different theological opinions, but of different views with regard to the Alliance itself. One class felt anxious to turn it to account as a demonstration against Roman Catholic and rationalistic errors, and a second class chiefly contemplated practical work at home and abroad. A third class, looking upon the assertion of dogmas and the fulfilment of missionary work as provided for by other means, desired mainly, perhaps exclusively, the cultivation of brotherly love. The first aimed at making the theological manifesto as broad as it could be, in consonance with the shades of opinion in the confederated body. The two other classes, especially the third, thinking only of a true “evangelical alliance,” felt adverse to the inclusion of any statements in which all spiritually minded Protestants could not concur. The ninth article, touching eternal punishment, occasioned much discussion. Whilst believing in the doctrine itself, some nevertheless objected to its introduction into the manifesto, on the ground that

¹ *Evangelical Alliance Report, 1846, p. 77.*

certain good men in full sympathy with their brethren felt doubts and difficulties respecting that awful subject. They looked on the gospel itself, the good tidings of salvation, tidings of great joy, as the proper bond of union, rather than the punitive consequences of its rejection, as the proper bond of fellowship. A day and a half were spent in debate on this question, and a large amount of earnestness appeared both on the side of those who wished to introduce and those who wished to omit the tenet; yet the patience maintained by all and the temper manifested by the minority presented a striking contrast to what has generally obtained in theological conventions. The article was carried, much to the regret of a few, who felt strong objection to it for the reasons just stated. The introduction of a controverted clause was owing, in a great measure, to the earnest insistence upon it by many of the Americans, who had been troubled by theories of universal restoration propagated in their own country. The proposition as to the Christian ministry and sacraments also produced lengthened discussion. Some lamented that the Society of Friends were thus excluded, and that an ecclesiastical element was united with the primary evangelical one, which was professed as the bond of union irrespective of opinions touching Church questions; but several ministers of the Episcopal communion considered it essential, and made it a condition of their own adherence to the enterprise. Some amongst the nonconformists also desired to have a recognition of the two typical ordinances of our religion.

It may be mentioned that, in the great conferences which have succeeded the first, many, who never subscribed or formally assented to the doctrinal basis, have by invitation from the committee read papers and taken part in the public proceedings.

Another subject of controversy arose. The question of American slavery was rife at the moment, and many abolitionists went so far as to decline Christian fellowship with slaveholders. Americans as well as Englishmen were divided on this point. No one present, either American or English, defended slavery ; but some thought a man might have become proprietor of a slave estate, and be a Christian nevertheless. Happily a compromise was reached in the following resolution : "In respect to the system of slavery, and every other form of oppression in any country, the Alliance are unanimous in deplored them as in many ways obstructing the progress of the gospel ; and express their confidence that no branch will admit to membership slaveholders who, by their own fault, continue in that position, retaining their fellow men in slavery from regard to their own interests."

On the Sunday following ministers of different denominations interchanged pulpits with each other, and there was a celebration of the Lord's Supper at the Episcopal chapel, Bedford Row, where Conformists were joined by Nonconformists. Amongst the clergy and Dissenters who were fathers and founders of the union, in addition to those already named, prominence ought to be given to the Revs. Edward Bickersteth, Dr. Steane, Dr. Raffles, Thomas Binney, Howard Hinton, and Ridley Herschell. These and

several other distinguished ministers took part in the early proceedings, and zealous laymen, including the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. George Hitchcock, promoted the undertaking.

In 1851, the year of the first Great Exhibition, a general council of the Alliance was held in London, "The list of ministers, professors, etc., who attended that conference presents sixty from France, forty from Switzerland, eleven from Belgium, twenty-two from Holland, forty-seven from Germany, six from Sweden, and twenty-two from the United States; besides individual names from Piedmont, Italy, Russia, Malta, Rhodes, the Cape of Good Hope, the East and West Indies, Tunis, and China."¹

If not the founder, certainly the chief pillar of support to this new enterprise was Sir Culling Eardley Smith. An Oxford man, possessed of wide intelligence, quick perception, an inquisitive temper, and ardent piety, he, with the added advantage of pecuniary means and social position, effectually promoted the interests of the enterprise. Indeed, but for him, the Alliance could not have been the success which it proved to be during his lifetime. A Churchman by birth and education, he became almost, if not entirely, a Congregationalist for a short time; and then returned to the adoption of Episcopalian worship before his death. His love for union was

¹ My authorities are reports of conferences published by the Alliance, and Memoirs of the Revs. J. A. James, Dr. Raffles, and Dr. Leifchild. Having been present at the first London conference, I can test the reports by my own recollections.

enthusiastic, and his urbanity, calmness, and forbearance were of the rarest order ; and by his hospitality he greatly promoted the object dear to his heart.¹

After Dr. Bird Sumner became Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1848, he manifested interest in the Alliance, and in 1857 received a deputation of ministers and laymen at Lambeth Palace. At the close of the meeting he called upon Mr. Bunting, son of Dr. Bunting, to offer prayer, "the first Nonconformist," his brother and biographer supposed, "who had prayed audibly in Lambeth Palace since the Restoration." The same year, when a conference was held at Berlin, under royal auspices, and with the expressed interest of Baron Bunsen, Dr. Alford, then recently made Dean of Canterbury, assisted at the holy communion, in consequence of which certain English clergymen took offence, and hunted up one of the canons as an instrument of attack. Writing to him just afterwards, the archbishop says : "I must take this opportunity of saying how much I have resented the bigotry and uncharitableness which the Berlin communion has excited. It is very right that at home we should keep out of canon shot ; but widely as the range has been extended of late years, I never before heard that it could be stretched across the Channel."²

The Evangelical Alliance proved a parent stock,

¹ I look back with interest upon the early gatherings at Sir Culling Eardley's. Lord Kinnaird is one of the few survivors of those who then met together.

² *Life of Dean Alford*, p. 281.

from which branched out some goodly boughs laden with fruit. Christian work of various kinds was an object of desire with many who joined in planting the tree. Organizations of certain kinds could not well be immediately connected with it, owing to diversities of ecclesiastical and theological opinions amongst the members ; but, in the course of time, agencies arose which originated virtually in the Evangelical Alliance. The week of prayer at the commencement of the year was a spiritual offshoot which, though involving public worship, was so simple that it presented no great practical difficulty. Numerous Evangelicals of all classes, at home and abroad, fell in with it, and prayer, with devout addresses, has since then followed in annual succession. Religious liberty on the Continent was, from the first, an end contemplated, as appears plainly in the well-known cases of the Madiai in Florence, of Matamoros in Spain, of Turkish converts in Constantinople, of Baptists in Germany, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland, of Nestorians in Persia, and of certain missionaries in the Baltic provinces. The better observance of the Lord's day is also an object which the Alliance endeavoured to promote, and the Christian Evidence Society is one of its cherished offspring.

Religious societies for the improvement of the young were formed in the seventeenth century. They made little advance for a hundred years, and no regular organization of the kind appeared until 1845. Then, instead of being confined to the Church of England or to any particular body of Dissenters, a plan was extended so as to embrace various denominations.

Side by side with slender efforts for mutual religious improvement there had arisen associations for mental culture. They were popular fifty years ago. Mechanics' Institutes took a high position, being zealously promoted by Dr. Birkbeck and warmly favoured by Lord Brougham. Science, art, and literature were studied in connexion with these societies ; and, as they sprang up in different parts of the country, they largely diffused a taste for intellectual pursuits. It was a rule that politics and theology should be excluded from discussion. Thus two methods of improvement for young men proceeded along distinct lines, one attending to religious interests apart from what is intellectual, the other attending to intellectual culture apart from religious improvement.

The Young Men's Christian Association was intended to bring together the two objects ; it sought to secure the salvation of souls, and to advance the cultivation of minds. The former was the primary aim, but the latter was distinctly kept in view. The impulse which gave birth to the effort was religious ; and here we have one amongst many instances of the way in which Christianity has ministered to human well-being in general. Spiritual principles have been found conducive to temporal advantage ; and religion, so far from crippling the intellect, is found conducive to the illumination and development of its faculties. The names of George Hitchcock and W. D. Owen were prominent among the movers in this new agency, and it was at No. 72, St. Paul's Church-yard, that the Young Men's Christian Association was formed.

The progress of the work was steady, gradual, and encouraging. The committee early learnt a truth, which has been their sheet-anchor, "In quietness and confidence shall be thy strength." No attempts were made to popularise the association. It was felt by the members that they were called to engage in a spiritual work, the conversion of souls to God. Accordingly, it was made a fundamental rule that none but members in communion with a Christian Church should be admitted to fellowship, and this was done in order that the unity of its aim and operations might be preserved.

Nothing strictly of a literary kind had been attempted in the societies founded by Horneck and Woodward, but the new institute worked in harmony with the Religious Tract Society, whose aim has long been, in its literary publications, to bathe the best forms of modern intelligence and thoughtfulness in the spirit of religion. But not only did the Young Men's Christian Association bring religion to bear on intellectual culture, it also applied the teaching of Christianity to the social affections. It has too often happened that in attempts at popular improvement the mind has been regarded too much as a sort of thinking machine, with "a speaking end," needing to be kept in order. The study of thought and the study of words have received attention, but there has been little regard paid to social propensities and to those sentiments of the affections which are amongst the best instincts of humanity. Young men cannot be always alone. To shut them up to read books, without seeking to unite them in cheerful companion-

ship, is morally as well as physically unhealthy. The founders of the Association saw this, and therefore, in addition to lectures and libraries, they fixed a centre of intercourse in the Aldersgate establishment. Other establishments on a like plan were soon formed throughout the country; and youths thus had secured to them an evening resort and a Sunday home,—an atmosphere of Christian kindness and love being breathed around them. I reckon this amongst the greatest advantages of the movement. At the beginning of the century no provision of the kind was known, and numbers of apprentices and shopmen, removed from their families and their friends, found no haven of peace into which they could turn amidst the temptations of early life.

Above all, conversion and spiritual improvement were from the beginning steadily kept in view. In 1851 the association held between five and six hundred meetings for prayer and addresses, and promoted meetings of a similar kind in commercial establishments. For many years lectures in Exeter Hall, delivered by Churchmen and Dissenters, attracted very large and enthusiastic audiences.

CHAPTER XX.

JUBILEES.

1830-50.

JUBILEES formed a Divine institution under the law of Moses. The fiftieth year was a season of gladness throughout the Holy Land. Slaves were freed ; lost inheritances were recovered.

Jubilee festivals of another kind were introduced into the Roman Catholic Church, and a proclamation of the institute was made by Boniface VIII. in 1299. So productive to the papal coffers were these feasts that they were absurdly multiplied. The dates of them may be seen registered above the *porta santa* of St. Peter's. Protestants were slow to adopt the idea ; but they have held several religious jubilees during this century.

The Baptist Missionary Society is denominational in fact and name, and noble has been its race, and illustrious are the names on its muster roll. Fifty years of arduous and successful toil were celebrated in 1842 ; and what gave a peculiar character to the celebration was the circumstance of its taking place in the very town where the enterprise had commenced. Kettering is identified with the society, and Northamptonshire gathers round it an interesting

association from what was done in one of its towns in the year 1792. It has been remarked, "For the tourist the sole point of interest in Kettering is the church." Certainly people did not think so on the last day of May and the first day of June, 1842, when they came flocking from all parts of the kingdom to hold high festival in memory of a work amongst the most momentous and sublime in the world. The roads, the fields, the streets were full of life, and thousands of hearts beat with joy. In a "little back parlour" the Fathers and Founders had met to arrange their plans and make their first collection. That "little back parlour" in the jubilee days became the central point of attraction and interest; in it remained the table, round which the workers sat, and on which the pounds, shillings, and pence were laid. "Knights of the Round Table" in stories of chivalry cannot vie with these real soldiers of the cross planning in that humble apartment their crusade to heathen lands. The latter in grandeur, as in reality, rise above the former, and sweep them beyond the field of vision. The lawn at the back of the consecrated spot was, at the time of the celebration, covered with an awning which inclosed flowers, shrubs, and trees, making the Northamptonshire nook appear like fairyland. A sermon was preached in the Baptist meeting-house on the evening of May 31st, by Mr. Godwin, of Oxford, from the words, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad"; another at the same time was delivered on another spot. Dr. Steane, on Wednesday, under a tent on the lawn, addressed a multitude

upon the passage, "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." Dr. Brock, of Norwich, preached at the same hour in the Independent meeting-house.

Five thousand assembled in the tent at night to hear speeches from Dr. Cox, Andrew Fuller's son, William Knibb the missionary, Dr. Angus, and others. People were told of stations planted in the East Indies, in northern India, in Asiatic isles, in Africa, the West Indies, and the Bahamas. Statistics were given of contributions running on from a little above £1,000 the first year, to more than £22,000 the fiftieth ; of converts won ; of 35,564 Church members in the jubilee year ; and of 19,577 inquirers or catechists besides. Finally, it was reported that 434,465 copies of Scripture and parts of Scripture had been supplied to the heathen during the forty years ending in April, 1841.

The names of Carey and others, already noticed, were received with special honour ; and the assembly rejoiced that divisions at Serampore were at an end. "We are all one here," the missionaries could say. "We cannot afford to be jealous, the common foe is too strong ; and the missionaries are bound together neither by creed nor human ties, but by the fear of God and by the love of Jesus." The Jamaica Churches, after all that had occurred, became self-supporting ; and after a year's experience of freedom, Sir Lionel Smith bore this testimony : "The admirable conduct of the peasantry in such a crisis has constituted a proud triumph to the cause of religion ; and those who contributed to enlighten them in their

moral duties, through persecutions, insults, and dangers, have deserved the regard and esteem of the good and the just in all Christian countries."

The jubilee of the London Missionary Society was held in 1844. The celebration was proposed at the annual meeting in the month of May, when a speaker,¹ on moving a resolution for that purpose, took occasion to remark that the society had been launched amidst the fears of the timid, the hopes of the sanguine, the world's ridicule, and the Churches' prayers; but, though beaten by storms and assailed by foes, though having had to steer amongst rocks and shoals, and sometimes, as the Directors could testify, having been "hard up" for provisions, yet, judging from the log-book, the vessel had performed a prosperous voyage, and there had never been a mutiny on board. All this was to be ascribed to the Divine Builder, Captain, and Pilot. A jubilee would be a fitting expression of gratitude and praise.

In the month of September celebration sermons were preached in London. James Parsons, of York, addressed a congregation of young people in the Poultry Chapel, urging compliance with Divine claims, and the dignity, usefulness, and happiness which such compliance would inevitably secure. William Jay, discoursing in Surrey Chapel on the word "Ebenezer," characteristically exhibited the nature and history of modern missions, as exemplified in the progress of this institution, and enforced the duty of supporting it, encouraged by past

¹ The author of these volumes.

experience of Divine help. Dr. Raffles, at Craven Chapel, expounded the command to Moses, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward," and pressed home the obligation of advancement founded on the design of the gospel and the condition of the world. A public meeting followed at Exeter Hall, under the presidency of Sir Culling Eardley Smith, treasurer of the society; but amidst congratulations on the society's success there were unhappily circumstances occurring in the missionary station at Tahiti, then threatened by French occupation, which threw a cloud over the Society's prospects, and marred, to some extent, the beauty and joy of the occasion. Jubilee meetings held in various parts of the country, and in several of the foreign stations, surmounted painful impressions made by these allusions in Exeter Hall.

A general review of the progress of the society, which was omitted in the jubilee celebration of September, was supplied at the annual meeting in the following May. Honour was then done to the fathers and founders.

"They were the reformers of our Churches," it is said in the report, "and gave a new character to their times. The spirit of the apostolic age again revived in our land, and from Britain the word of the Lord sounded forth to the ends of the earth. The influence of this newly felt principle was, indeed, for a time limited, but it has continued without intermission to increase both in power and extent to the present day. Of this a conclusive proof will be found in the augmented contributions to the missionary cause. For the first ten years of the society's existence,

its aggregate receipts did not greatly exceed our present revenue for half a year. From the tenth to the twentieth year of its labours, its average income was little more than half the present yearly contributions of our mission Churches ; and our annual receipts are now nearly equal to the aggregate resources of that entire period."

The triumphs and trials of the society were reviewed, and the state of Madagascar and Tahiti was sympathetically described.

"What," it was asked, in reference to the persecutions endured by the Malagasy converts—"what if those babes in Christ, bereft of their fathers, and deprived of the succours of the sanctuary, had yielded to their powerful and malignant foes, and by denying their new faith had purchased liberty and life, then if we had wept tears of blood, our grief could not have exceeded the occasion. But thanks be to God ! though the Church of Madagascar has had martyrs, it has had no apostates ; its confessors have been faithful unto death, and they have received the crown of life. And, while mourning over the desolations of that island, let us not forget that the tree of life is planted there ; and though its fruits may be scattered and its branches torn by the ruthless hand of persecution, yet, when the race of persecutors shall have passed away, that tree—for its germ is indestructible—shall grow and thrive, and its extended branches shall wave over their unhonoured ashes."

Also, as to Tahiti, the bright side of the scene was prominently exhibited.

"The people who have fled from their homes to breathe the air of liberty in the fastnesses of the mountains have carried their Bibles with them, and amidst the wild scenes

of their retreat they present to the God of their salvation their morning and evening sacrifices ; there they honour the Sabbath in solemn assembly, and make the glens and the mountains vocal with their praise."

There were present on these occasions, and taking part in the proceedings, three secretaries, John Arundell, Joseph John Freeman, and Arthur Tidman. Mr. Arundell had for many years sustained the office—a simple-minded, spiritual, and holy man, who loved the Society as he loved his life, and had served it in days when it made a humbler appearance than in the year of jubilee. Mr. Freeman, a man of vigour, ready speech, and impassioned address, combined with business aptitudes, had himself laboured in Madagascar as a missionary, and therefore brought lessons of observation and experience to bear upon the duties of the secretariat. Mr., afterwards Dr., Tidman—possessed of intellectual power of a business kind, not at home in abstract speculation, but a master in such qualities as make the lawyer and the statesman—might be said to have been, at that time, the Society itself, so great was the control which he had over its operations, such control being the result of ability, zeal, and devotedness.

The Church Missionary Society was established in the year 1799, and it resolved to hold a jubilee, commencing in 1848 and concluding in 1849. The main objects contemplated were humiliation before God for an inadequate improvement of advantages, gratitude to Him for His manifold mercies, and resolutions of amendment in activity and zeal. The three objects were kept in view through all the pro-

ceedings of the festival. A fund was determined upon for disabled missionaries ; a boarding school for the children of labourers in the field ; the assistance of native Christian Churches ; and the erection of permanent buildings for schools and other missionary purposes. The tone indicated in all the resolutions, speeches, and sermons was eminently devout. "On the 12th of April, 1799," it is said in the address of the committee, "twenty-five individuals, clerical and lay, not one distinguished by rank or station, met together to institute this Society. They submitted their plan to their ecclesiastical superiors. For fifteen months they waited in a state of inaction." How the committee and their friends rejoiced in their last anniversary, presided over by the primate of all England, in the largest room in the metropolis, which could scarcely accommodate the assembled crowds ! Another contrast appeared in facilities for carrying on missionary work. Fifty years before Europe was at war with England ; India was virtually barred against the gospel ; New Zealand was shunned ; the Mediterranean was a battlefield for hostile fleets ; in the West Indies negroes were crushed to the earth body and soul. Now there was easy access everywhere. India not only welcomed the preachers of the gospel, but reproached slackness in not sending more ; the firstfruits were gathered, and waved before the Lord ; unreaped fields were whitening for the harvest ; New Zealand was won by missionaries ; and the West Indies, having anticipated their jubilee, had permitted forces to be withdrawn for other conquests.

The means at disposal in men and money had

wonderfully increased. At the end of the first decade the income had slowly crept up to £2,118; now it reached above £89,000. The society could number 166 European teachers, 14 native clergymen, and 1,298 lay instructors. Training establishments existed in Islington, Sierra Leone, Tinnevelly, Travancore, and Ceylon. Native Churches, congregations, and schools supplied more than thirteen thousand communicants. The committee pressed home on their friends personal inquiries respecting sacrifices from love to Christ, the exercise of Christian influence on friends and neighbours, pains taken to imbue the young with a missionary spirit, and perseverance in prayer for those fighting on the high places of the field. They inquired what might be done to rouse others by the press, by the pulpit and correspondence, by appeals to the universities, by friendly conference, and by systematic exertions in various ways.¹

What appears to have been an affecting incident in this commemoration was the gathering of early and hereditary friends, who, under the presidency of the Earl of Chichester, met at breakfast in the Castle and Falcon Hotel, Aldersgate Street, on the 1st of November, in the room supposed to be the same where the first meeting of the society was held in 1799. There, too, the founders of the London Missionary Society had met four years before for a similar purpose. Sermons were preached in St. Paul's Cathedral by Canon Dale, and at St. Anne's, Blackfriars, by Edward Bickersteth. The pulpit in

¹ *Jubilee Volume*, pp. vi.-x.

the last church was also occupied during the jubilee by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and by Dr. Dealytry, who had now become Archdeacon of Calcutta.

A public meeting was held in Exeter Hall, when the President, Lord Chichester, touchingly observed :

“O my friends, this jubilee of ours is indeed a happy season for those to whom God has given a capacity for such enjoyments, for those who know the blessedness of pardon and redemption, who know enough of the love of Christ to rejoice in His work, and to long for a fuller manifestation of His glory. Many thousands of souls thus blessed were yesterday engaged in the work of prayer and praise—praying for the same blessings, praising God for the same mercies. The sun of yesterday, in his circuit through the heavens, dawned on many a band of happy converts thus engaged—bright spots in the midst of pagan darkness, like distant and scattered watch-fires in a starless night. May we not suppose, my friends, that those beloved brethren, the fruits of our poor, unworthy labours, were engaged in praying to God for us, as we were praying for them ; that they were praising God on our behalf, as we were praising Him on theirs ? We may depend upon it that such prayers and praises are heard in heaven ; that such songs from ransomed sinners, wafted by the intercession of our Immanuel, ascend into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. But, alas ! my friends, this world below has as yet no ear for such music. There is nothing, I think, in God’s creation that affords such a melancholy subject for our thoughts as that mass of darkness and sin which still covers this miserable world. For eighteen hundred years the heralds of Christ have been proclaiming His message and His kingdom. For eighteen hundred years the King Himself, our great High Priest, has been pleading before His Father’s throne ; but, as yet, the world in general

is alike deaf to His message and dead to His love. This is, indeed, an oppressing thought, sad enough to crush our hopes and our energies, if we did not remember the name of Him who is called 'Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace'; that the government of this apparent chaos is committed to His shoulders; and that, by His word, by His Spirit, by His judgments, and at last by His coming, He will at length subdue every enemy, and restore peace and light and joy to this wicked and restless world."¹

The name of the man to whom above all others, probably, the proceedings of the Jubilee were indebted was the secretary, Henry Venn. He was son, of John Venn, Rector of Clapham, who planned the scheme of the society in the first instance. One more devoted to his Master's glory and human salvation, we may conclude from his memoir, never lived; and an interesting example of ministerial consecration is found in the following incident, which he himself relates:

"One of the first sick men I ever visited parochially was when I was at Beckenham in 1820. He lived in a small cottage on Penge Common. Before he died, I took Brandram (incumbent of Beckenham and secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society) to see him, and he was satisfied that the sick man had received the grace of God, and told me so when he came out of the cottage, for I had waited at the door. My sensations at the hope that this was the firstfruits of my ministry I can recall with lively emotions at the present day (1871); and when I pass by the Brighton Railway, and gaze upon the splendid Crystal Palace, and

¹ *Jubilee Volume*, p. 277.

then at the streets of villas which now cover what I knew as Penge Common, all these present scenes pass as a dissolving view from my mind, and I dwell upon the little two-roomed cottage, and its white door, and the extent of common before it reaching up to Norwood, and I think if my life were to begin again, how much rather would I spend it in conveying to lost souls the light of the gospel than in many of the great controversies in which it has been my lot to become involved.”¹

“ He was endowed with a singularly calm judgment, united to no ordinary warmth of heart and patient resolve, and these gifts of nature were refined and strengthened by Divine grace. To people to whom the subject is unfamiliar, the position of chief secretary of such a society may appear of little importance ; but it brings its holder into contact, if he only rises to the occasion, with almost every question involving either the doctrine and discipline of the Church at home and abroad, or the civilization and moral—nay, often material—progress of the world. Through a long life which was a ‘self-denying ordinance,’ this wise man chose the substance rather than the show of power ; and many who with him are gone to their rest, and others who still remain, could testify to his wonderful, though always most unobtrusive influence, which swayed and bent most men to his will, as the steady set of the Atlantic gale bends and sways the trees on our westerly shores. It is not too much to say that in many an episcopal palace and Government office his word was one of no little weight, though it would be premature and in some cases a violation of confidence to dwell on details.”²

¹ *Memoir of Venn*, p. 105. He took an active part in the ritualistic question, and was examined on the subject by a committee of the House of Lords.

² *Ibid.* p. 358.

The Religious Tract Society, also, after a successful course since 1799, held its jubilee in 1849, and could then report a vast variety of interesting facts extending over that wide interval. Through its home operations an immense number of tracts had been circulated through the land, some to perish—like what was sown by him whom the greatest teacher of the world described—to perish “by the wayside,” on “stony ground,” and “among thorns”; but reports testify that much must have fallen on “good ground,” to produce the harvest reckoned up in the interesting memorial volume. Stories of drunkards made sober, of profligates reclaimed, of infidels convinced, of the profane brought to reverence God, of sick men comforted, of children led to Jesus, of cottages transformed from dens of riot into abodes of peace,—all these abound in the report of the fiftieth year. In addition to details of English work we find statistics of publications in one hundred and ten languages and dialects, so that Bunyan’s *Pilgrim* and Richmond’s *Dairyman’s Daughter* were read under the eastern palm, in the North American wigwam, on the shores of southern islands, and in forests of the far west. These facts are set forth with much homeliness of detail, with marked Christian simplicity, with warm sympathetic interest in the pages of the *Jubilee Volume*. From 1824 to 1834 inclusive, gratuitous operations did not exceed the benevolent income; but in 1835 a new era had commenced, and gratuitous issues had amounted in value to more than £800 beyond free contributions. The publishing business not only sustained itself, paying all expenses for

years, but grants were made exceeding the amount of subscribed income and bequeathed legacies.

It is remarkable that all the founders were living at the time of the twenty-fifth anniversary, but very few early friends remained to grace the celebration of the Jubilee. Mr. Lloyd, who joined the committee in 1816, and Dr. Henderson, who, at Copenhagen in 1806, published the first tract in the Danish language, were spared to learn what had been accomplished during fifty years.

The Jubilee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was peculiar in more respects than one. It was not the first of such festivals, but the third. The society was instituted in 1701; in 1851 the celebration immediately followed the opening of the Great Exhibition, and was connected with it in references made on the occasion. It partook of a State character from the presidency, at the public meeting, of His Royal Highness, the Prince Consort; the preliminary arrangements having been conducted through the medium of Lord John Russell. "The confluence of visitors from all our Indian and colonial possessions, drawn together by the Great Exhibition, was favourable to a jubilee of this kind; and it was felt that the presence of the Prince at a time when the country was agitated by the controversies and divisions to which the papal aggression had given rise, would do much to secure harmony and confidence, and, at the same time, enlist substantial sympathy and help for the objects of the society." The Prince's assent, as intimated to the archbishop, was given "in the full confidence that this was not a movement adopted

particularly by any party in the Church, but that the Church generally would be represented at the meeting, and that consequently there would be full security that no expressions would be used that could give just cause of offence to any denomination of Christians." "The prince took particular precautions that moderate as well as High Churchmen should be among the speakers."¹ No one spoke who was likely to be otherwise than moderate. Dr. Blomfield, Bishop of London, Lord John Russell, Earl Grey, Sidney Herbert, Dr. Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Harrowby, and Dr. Sumner, Archbishop of Canterbury, moved and seconded the resolutions. The speech of his royal highness struck the note which pervaded throughout. Its character may be inferred from the following passage :

"The first jubilee of the society fell in times when religious apathy had succeeded to the over-excitement of the preceding age. Lax morals and a sceptical philosophy began to undermine the Christian faith, treating with indifference and even ridicule the most sacred objects. Still this society persevered in its labours with unremitting zeal, turning its chief attention to the North American continent, where a young and vigorous society was rapidly growing into a people.

"This, the third jubilee, falls in a happier epoch, when peace is established in Europe, and religious fervour is rekindled, and at an auspicious moment when we are cele-

¹ *Life of the Prince Consort.* By Sir Theodore Martin. Part ii. p. 63.

brating a festival of the civilization of mankind, to which all quarters of the globe have contributed their productions, and are sending their people, for the first time recognising their advancement as a common good, their interests as identical, their mission on earth the same. And this civilization rests on Christianity, could only be raised on Christianity, can only be maintained by Christianity, the blessings of which are now carried by this society to the vast territories of India and Australasia, which last are again to be peopled by the Anglo-Saxon race. Whilst we have thus to congratulate ourselves upon our state of temporal prosperity, harmony at home, and peace abroad, we cannot help deplored that the Church, whose exertions for the progress of Christianity and civilization we are to-day acknowledging, should be afflicted by internal dissensions and attacks from without. I have no fear, however, for her safe and ultimate welfare, so long as she holds fast to what our ancestors gained for us at the Reformation—the gospel, and the unfettered right of its use. The dissensions and difficulties which we witness in this, as in every other Church, arise from the natural and necessary conflict of the two antagonistic principles which move human society, in Church as well as in State, I mean the principles of individual liberty and of allegiance and submission to the will of the community, exacted by it for its own preservation.”¹

The society from the beginning had been almost entirely of a Colonial character, and that character it preserved still. It did not, like the Baptist, the London, and the Church Missionary institutions, send forth agents for the conversion of heathens in all parts of the world, whether within or without

¹ *Life of the Prince Consort*, Part ii. p. 63.

the territories of Great Britain. At the time of this third jubilee, operations were almost entirely confined to British possessions in Asia, South Africa, Australia, and North and South America ; the work carried on being connected as closely as possible with Colonial bishoprics in existence at that time. The society's income, which in 1830 reached only £17,370, in the jubilee year of 1851 reached £101,356 ; but £55,582 of this was for special purposes connected with the commemoration.

The contrast between the state of feeling which existed in the Church of England with reference to this organization in 1851, and that which prevailed a hundred and fifty years before, is very striking as well as obvious. The colonial spirit still remained in a large measure ; "the plantations," as they were called of old, were prominent in the society's records : but the lines of effort were being cast beyond, and glowing allusions were warranted to a wider range of Christian sympathy. "Hearts have been touched," said the Bishop of Oxford, under the dome of St. Paul's, just before the jubilee, "and the wealth of England has been given, as it never had been before offered ; nor is this all, or even the chiefest matter. She has given to the work of her own sons, yea, her best and goodliest. To India and its isles, to Persia and the frozen Labrador, to Australasia and the coral reefs of the New Zealand islands, have her chosen messengers gone forth, lured from all which makes an English home so precious, by the exceeding sweetness of His voice who called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, and drew Saul of Tarsus from his

Jewish home to his long course of labours, sufferings, bonds, and martyrdom.”¹

Two Sunday - school commemorations occurred within twenty-one years: the first in 1831, celebrating what Raikes commenced at Gloucester; the second in 1852, commemorating the commencement of the Sunday-school Union. It is interesting to notice that the poet Montgomery in 1829 wrote a letter in which he said, “It has occurred to me that a Sunday-school jubilee in the year 1831, fifty years from the origin of Sunday - schools, might be the means of extraordinary and happy excitement to the public mind in favour of these institutions, of which there was never more need than at this time, when daily instruction is within the reach of every family; for the more universal the education of the poor becomes, the greater necessity there is that they should have religious knowledge imparted to them, which can be done perhaps on no day so well as the Lord’s.” The suggestion was adopted, and the bard and Mrs. Gilbert, sister to Jane Taylor, wrote hymns to be sung on the occasion. Medals were struck as mementos of the event. Exeter Hall had been just opened, and into that vast apartment crowded above 4,000 children, who, when they had settled down like gurgling waters within a huge reservoir, were appropriately addressed by Dr. Morison. But the place, large as it is, could not receive all who pressed for entrance, and the necessarily excluded young ones

¹ Sermons by Samuel Wilberforce, D.D., Bishop of Oxford, 1854, p. 157.

soon filled the lower room. But the enthusiasm was so great that even then all could not be satisfied, and extra gatherings were held in different parts of London ; so that fifty thousand scholars, it is computed, joined that day in the popular demonstration. In the afternoon there followed a public meeting in the great hall under the presidency of Lord Henley. Speech after speech evoked cheers, such as Sunday-school teachers alone know how to raise, and at the completion of the programme, the chairman declared that the audience exceeded in numbers and in "knowledge, intelligence, and Christian spirit" every meeting he had ever attended. He had before received no adequate idea of the great work accomplished in Sunday schools.

In many parts of the country there were similar celebrations, and so delighted were the Halifax teachers, that they repeated what they called jubilees afterwards every five years. One year 20,000 teachers and scholars, and above 500 musical performers assembled in the Piece Hall for a service of song.

The Jubilee of the Sunday-school Union commenced on the 13th of July, 1852, when a meeting of the committee was held, and the progress of the work was reviewed from the beginning ; the grace of Divine providence throughout was devoutly acknowledged ; emphasis was laid on the absence of denominational peculiarities, and it was resolved to provide rooms for libraries of reference and circulation, and for weekly meetings of classes, with means for occasional conferences and the increase of union business. The country was then visited, during the following twelve

months, for the purpose of obtaining subscriptions to carry out these comprehensive schemes; and on Sunday, July 10th, 1853, the Jubilee celebration itself commenced. It consisted of devotional services and discourses, and on one of the week-days a breakfast,—one of the characteristic institutes of the Union at its anniversaries—took place, when Mr. Challis, the Lord Mayor of London and a zealous Sunday-school teacher, occupied the chair. In the evening of the same day a dense multitude assembled in Exeter Hall to hear speeches from the lips of warm-hearted friends.

The Jubilee of the Bible Society followed in 1854. The first gathering was at the London Tavern on the 7th of March, in the same room which witnessed the laying of the society's foundation. Foreign and domestic agents, secretaries of different missionary societies, officers of auxiliaries, with other influential friends, were present. They placed on record their grateful sense of Divine providence, in raising the institution from small beginnings to unanticipated magnitude and eminence; in rescuing it from perils; in preserving its constitution; and in giving it a position not surpassed at any period in its annals. Expressions of affection were tendered to the venerable Dr. Steinkopff, the first foreign secretary, who was spared to be present on the occasion.

A great meeting was held in Exeter Hall, when the chair was occupied by the Earl of Shaftesbury, who had succeeded Lord Bexley as President, and speeches were delivered by the Bishop of Winchester, John Angell James, of Birmingham, the Duke of

Argyll, Dr. Duff, the Earl of Carlisle, Josiah Forster, and several other representative men.

“The anticipations expressed at the opening of the jubilee year were realized, and even more than realized. The interest then awakened was sustained and increased, and spread itself to the utmost limits of the circle embraced by the society. Never before in the history of the institution had there been so widespread a demonstration in its favour, never had greater efforts been made to uphold and advocate its cause. Old friends rallied around it with indications of unabated attachment, and new friends were gathered whose accession gave hopeful promise for the future. Its proceedings were published and made known in every direction, and its claims were admitted in quarters where before they had been little heard of. The pulpit, the platform, and the press combined in this acceptable service, and innumerable friends in these different ways came forward to serve the society during this memorable year.”¹

One man was missing on the occasion, who had served the society wisely and well for twenty-seven years as clerical secretary—the Rev. Andrew Brandram, who died in December, 1850. He had gained a high reputation at the University with a “double first-class,” and to eminence in learning he conjoined a masculine mind, an uncompromising spirit, active habits, strong affections, and devoted piety. I think I see him now, with the appearance of a country gentleman, portly in figure, honest in countenance, with a loose coat, a large hat, a thick neckcloth, and a bag of papers in his hand, entering a committee

¹ *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, p. 261.

room before the commencement of a meeting, with open hand to return friendly grasps, given by friends waiting for his arrival. His brother secretary, the Rev. George Browne, was pastor of an old Congregational Church at Clapham; a contrast in some respects to Mr. Brandram, he resembled a dignitary of the Church,—careful in dress, polished in manner, gentle in disposition, a good man, a diligent worker, respected by everybody. On him devolved the preparation of the jubilee volume, which details with minuteness the society's history from the commencement.

CHAPTER XXI.

1800-50.

THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH.

ROBERT HINDMARSH, a London printer, is mentioned as one of the earliest English disciples of Emanuel Swedenborg. He was elected to preach, and to ordain others to the ministry. Swedenborg found sympathizers in the Church of England, and Mr. Clowes, a Manchester clergyman, translated and eulogized Swedenborg's works, but still remained in the English establishment. An English Swedenborg Society was established in 1810, for circulating the works of the Swedish philosopher; then it was that his system might be said to come distinctly within the circle of English Christendom. That society has been most active and liberal in the circulation of his works, and copies of them have been placed in many of the public libraries of this country and of the continent. The singularity of Swedenborgianism rests very much on the peculiar claims of its founder, and these claims may best be explained in language taken from his works. To set them forth in other words is sure to incur from his disciples the charge of misrepresentation. "I have been called," he says, "to a holy office by the Lord, who most graciously manifested

Himself in person to me, His servant, in the year 1745, and opened my sight into the spiritual world, endowing me with the gift of conversing with spirits and angels." From that point of departure he goes on, through many volumes, to unfold what had been manifested to him.

The interpretation of Scripture lies at the basis of Christian theology. A distinction between the literal and the mystic senses of Holy Writ had been adopted by some of the early Fathers, and Swedenborg so far walked in their steps, but it was in a fashion of his own. From the authoritative books of the Word he excluded all which we find in the New Testament, except the four Gospels and the Apocalypse. This exclusion proceeded, not on critical, but on spiritual grounds ; and in a letter to Dr. Beyer he describes the writings of Paul and other apostles, not on Swedenborg's list, as "dogmatic" merely, and not written in the style of the Word. "Nevertheless the writings of the apostles are to be regarded as excellent books, and to be held in the highest esteem, for they insist on the two essential articles of charity and faith, in the same manner as the Lord Himself has done in the Gospels and in the Apocalypse." In a book on the doctrine of Holy Scripture, Swedenborg states there is a sense in Scripture before unknown ; that Scripture is full of correspondences or hieroglyphics, which are made known unto none but those who are principled in genuine truths from the Lord.¹ In "the doctrine of the Lord," we are told that "He came to subjugate

¹ *Doctrine concerning the Sacred Scripture*, pp. 5, 6, 26.

the hells, and to glorify His humanity, and that the passion of the Cross was the last combat by which He fully conquered the hells, and fully glorified His humanity"; that "He made His humanity Divine from the Divinity which was in Him, and that He thus became One with the Father"; He "put off by successive steps the humanity from the mother, and put on a humanity from the Divinity in Himself, which is the Divine humanity and the Son of God."¹ The Athanasian Creed is said to agree with the truth, if understood to mean a Trinity in one Person.

The doctrine of justification by faith, generally regarded as the pillar of Protestantism, was Swedenborg's abhorrence, the result, he tells us, of what he saw and heard in the spiritual world. In his descriptions of "heaven and hell" he informs us that the angels wear changes of raiment, which they take off and put on; that he had talked with them mouth to mouth in their own habitation, containing courts and bedrooms, surrounded by gardens and shrubberies. His revelations of that world and his interpretation of the *Apocalypse* are amongst his extraordinary peculiarities. *Memorable Relations* are subjoined to the *Apocalypse Revealed*. "Six hundred of the English clergy once were permitted to ascend to a society of the superior heaven, where they saw their king (George II.), with whom they conversed about their application to the Lord, and not to God the Father. After this the king presented two bishops in company with heavenly gifts, from which, and from their king,

¹ *Doctrine of the Lord*, pp. 12, 29, 35.

they were suddenly separated.”¹ He speaks of “the abyss which is in the southern quarter towards the east, or of the hell of those who have confirmed in themselves justification and salvation by faith alone, who are all of the Reformed Church.”² He entered into controversy with one in the other world who believed in justification by faith alone, and says, “The man growing angry took up a candlestick to throw at me, but the candle going out, he threw it in the face of his companion.”³ Swedenborg says that in the spirit-world he met and conversed with Luther, and as often as the Reformer recollects what was taught by the New Church he began to ridicule his own former tenets, as in direct opposition to the Word; that he lived in a house like that which he occupied at Eisleben; that at the last judgment, in the year 1757, he was removed from his first habitation and translated into the societies of the blessed in the new heaven.⁴

The best philosophical account of Swedenborgianism I have met with contains the following sympathetic passage :

“Swedenborg did not lay claim to inspiration, but to an opening of his spiritual sight, and a rational instruction in spiritual things, which was granted, as he said, not for any merit of his, but to enable him to convey to the world a

¹ *Apocalypse Revealed*, p. 851.

² *Ibid.*, p. 852.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 854.

⁴ *The Heaven and Hell*, *The Apocalypse Revealed*, and *The Christian Religion*, are works by Swedenborg which fully describe his marvellous experiences.

real knowledge of the nature of heaven and hell, and thus of man's future existence. According to Swedenborg, heaven and hell are not in space, but they are internal and spiritual states, so that intromission into the spiritual world is only the opening of an interior consciousness. The outward face of the spiritual world resembles that of the natural world in every particular, and man's spiritual body appears precisely similar to his natural body; but the difference is that all the objects of the spiritual world represent, and change with, the spiritual states of its inhabitants; the magnificent objects in the heavens being actually determined according to the good affections of the angels, and the terrible appearances in the hells being an outbirth of the evil and falsity of the infernals. Heaven and hell are from mankind, and all angels and devils have once been men, either in this or other planets, for all the planets are inhabited, since the human race, and the formation of heaven therefrom, is the final end of creation. The Satan and Devil of Holy Scripture is not a person, but a collective name of hell. The last judgment mentioned in the Gospels does not mean the destruction of the world, which, like every Divine work, has respect to infinity and eternity, and will endure for ever, but a judgment in the spiritual world, since all who die are gathered together there, and since it is man's spirit which is judged. This judgment commences for every individual immediately after death."¹

The Rev. J. Hartley, a Northamptonshire clergyman, who died in 1754, was a Swedenborgian, and wrote treatises on enthusiasm and the mystic writers, and translated into English some of the writings of the Swedish philosopher. The Rev.

¹ Article "Swedenborg," *Penny Cyclopædia*.

John Clowes, who died in 1831, published several works in defence of the system. Swedenborgians in this country are described as divided into two portions, one forming a denomination such as is known to the world, another remaining without visible separation from the Established Church.¹ Societies were reported, in 1842, as amounting to between forty and fifty, and in 1850, according to the census then taken, there were fifty Swedenborgian places of worship, with 11,465 sittings and 4,846 persons in attendance.

The liturgy of the New Church, prepared by order of the London General Conference, gives twelve articles of faith condensed from Swedenborg's writings. They declare at great length that Jehovah God "is one both in essence and in person, in whom nevertheless is the Divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit, which are the essential Divinity, the Divine humanity, and the divine proceeding, answering to the soul, the body, and the operative energy in man"; that Jehovah God descended from heaven as Divine truth, and took upon Him human nature; that the

¹ It is curious to read the following sentence: "There is more than a suspicion that the initiators of the new Oxford theology (the editor of Froude's *Remains* and others) were acquainted with the early readers of Swedenborg; and that hence originally came their repudiation of the fundamental doctrine of justification by faith alone" (Art. "Swedenborg," *Penny Cyclopædia*). The statement, if it met the eyes of Tractarians, must have filled them with surprise! The doctrine of justification which they held was substantially that of theologians who wrote long before the Swedish theologian was born.

sacred Scriptures, or word of God, is Divine truth itself, containing a spiritual sense heretofore unknown ; that the government of the Lord's Divine love and wisdom is the Divine providence ; that man is not life, but only a recipient of life from the Lord ; that during his abode in the world he is, as to his spirit, between heaven and hell, acted upon by influences from both, but enjoys freedom of choice in spiritual as in natural things ; that he is born into evil of all kinds, and must be regenerated or created anew ; that repentance is the first beginning of the Church in man ; that charity, faith, and good works are necessary to salvation ; that baptism and the holy supper are sacraments of Divine institution ; that after death a material body will not be resumed ; and that *now* is the time of the second advent of the Lord.¹

¹ I have endeavoured to preserve the peculiar phraseology of the document.

POSTSCRIPT.

1850-1880.

SECTION I.—*CHURCH OF ENGLAND.*

THE twenty years traversed in the last few chapters bring us to a point where it is desirable to pause. What followed was fraught with issues working out both good and evil; and we are too near the head of a new river to judge respecting the course of the stream. We cannot tell what tributaries may yet swell the waters, or in what direction they may ultimately sweep. A history of passing times is never satisfactory. In the thick of a battle a soldier cannot sit down to tell a whole story of the struggle. He can with confidence record only how his own regiment carries on the fight; and even in doing this personal prejudice and defective vision may affect the accuracy of honest representations. Yet in closing this work I beg to notice a few facts which began to appear about the period we have reached.

It has been remarked that “the Church includes a large number of corporations without being a corporation itself. When people speak of the wealth, or the estates, or the revenues of the Church, they mean the whole of the wealth, estates, or revenues

belonging to the different ecclesiastical corporations included within it.”¹ There are proprietary rights pertaining to particular clerical bodies recognized by law, and no outside authority but that of Parliament can really affect them. Two ecclesiastical corporations—Queen Anne’s Bounty Board and the Ecclesiastical Commission—differ from those composed of Bishops, Deans and chapters, and from other bodies exclusively clerical.

Queen Anne’s Bounty, as we have seen, was a fund formed for the relief of poor clergymen, and was regulated and supplemented in 1809, when the House of Commons added £100,000 to the funds of the corporation. In 1870, under a new act, the trustees instituted rules, allowing £200 for each augmentation, to be laid out in land to be annexed to the living—first, to those below £10 a year; secondly, to those below £20 a year; and so, in order, while any remain under £50 a year. This may not seem an important item, but it ought to be noticed in connexion with what has been done by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners entrusted with the management of Church property in the reign of William IV.

The Ecclesiastical Commission originally seemed to be a department of the State, its members being closely connected with the Government. In 1840 a change took place in the constitution of the administrative body, adding to the Commissioners all the Bishops, and the Deans of Canterbury, Westminster, and St. Paul’s, with four laymen, two to be appointed

¹ *The State and the Church.* By the Hon. A. Elliot, p. 78.

by the Primate. In 1850 another alteration occurred in the appointment of two laymen by the Queen and one by the Archbishop, the effect of the whole being "not merely to create a preponderance of the spiritual over the lay element, but to withdraw the general management of business from the latter, of whom a large proportion rarely or never attended its meetings."¹ The Commissioners dealt with episcopal revenues, and out of the richer sees created a fund, called the Episcopal Fund, for the augmentation of poor bishoprics. In 1860, through a change of system, the Commissioners became possessed of the estates of a vacant see, for which they were to assign lands sufficient to yield the required statutory revenue. The income from cathedral estates being improved, and cathedral establishments being reduced, by advice of the Commissioners, they found themselves possessed of a large surplus, which became a common fund for ecclesiastical purposes. During forty years nearly five thousand benefices were augmented and endowed, to the amount of about £620,000 annually; besides, a sum of £145,000 was received from voluntary benefactors for similar purposes. The total increase of incomes effected up to 1881 through the Commission is estimated as about three quarters of a million.²

A change in the terms of clerical subscription was made in 1865, by an act to amend, so far, Charles the Second's Act of Uniformity. The old formula,

¹ *The State and the Church.* By the Hon. A. Elliot, p. 104.

² *Ibid.*, p. 108.

"I do hereby declare my unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed by the book entitled the Book of Common Prayer, etc.," was exchanged for the following: "I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion and to the Book of Common Prayer, and of the ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. I believe the doctrine of the United Church of England and Ireland as therein set forth, to be agreeable to the Word of God, and in Public Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments I will use the Form in the said Book prescribed and none other except as far as shall be ordered by lawful Authority."¹

This modification relieved the consciences of some who scrupled to make the former declaration, but others felt that to use the Book implied assent to its contents. It could not meet the case of such as altogether object to an Act of Uniformity; yet, taken in connexion with other changes, it left the old statute in a different form from that in which it came out of the hands of Parliament in 1662.

The progress of Ritualism in the Church of England after the middle of the century was wide and rapid; consequently, in 1867, Her Majesty appointed a Commission of Bishops and other dignitaries, together with a few distinguished laymen, to inquire into the rubrics, orders, and directions for regulating the course and conduct of public worship, according to the use of the United Church of England and Ireland. The Commissioners sat from the

¹ xxviii. and xxix. Vict. c. 122.

17th of June to the 19th of August, and examined at length seventeen witnesses, who represented different sections of the Establishment. The questions put related to a number of points connected with the conduct of public worship in cathedrals and parish churches. The Commissioners dated their report the 19th of August, and in it they said vestments were regarded by some as symbolical of doctrine,¹ and by others as intended to honour the highest act of worship, but none held them to be essential, and to many they give grave offence. The Commissioners thought deviations from long

¹ The following answers, by the Rev. C. J. de Geyt, show the doctrinal significance attached to certain vestments.

Answer: "The vestments I take to mean a distinctive dress for the priests at the time of celebrating the holy communion."

Question: "Not as implying any particular opinion or doctrine?"

A. : "I can hardly say that: I should say it would imply doctrine."

Q. : "What doctrine?"

A. : "I should certainly think the use of the chasuble would imply the belief in the doctrine of sacrifice—eucharistic sacrifice—that being the object of a distinctive dress."—*First Ritual Report*, p. 16.

Another answer shows the reliance placed by the Ritualists on the authority of the first prayer-book of Edward VI., alluded to in the well-known rubric before the Order for morning and evening prayer.

Q. : "With regard to these ornaments, do you use them because they were enjoined by authority of Parliament in the second year of King Edward VI.?"

A. : "That was my authority for using them."—*First Ritual Report*, p. 11.

established usage ought to be restrained, but were not prepared to say exactly by what method. Three of the Commissioners qualified their accordance in the report.

The Commissioners renewed their sittings November 21st, 1867, which was their twentieth meeting. On the 28th they began to examine further witnesses, and the sittings did not terminate until April 30th, 1868. The use of lighted candles and of incense were subjects of inquiry, and a large body of evidence as to Church practices in these respects was in this way obtained. The report, dated the last day of April, expressed opinions respecting lighted candles, that they had been introduced within the last twenty-five years, and for three centuries before had not been used, and that the use of incense was also very recent. The course recommended was an adoption of the practice respecting vestments and candles for the last three centuries, as a rule; and the application of aggrieved parishioners to the Bishop *in camerâ*, who should inquire into the matter and decide accordingly: —the episcopal decision being subject to revision on the part of the provincial Primate, whose judgment should be final. To this general opinion there succeeded particular precautions and recommendations,—also an expression of anxiety “in no degree to abridge or curtail any of the rightful liberties heretofore enjoyed by the clergy and laity of the United Church.” Six of the Commissioners declined to sign the report, and four dissented from certain parts of it. The other nineteen appended their names without qualification.

Before the Commission was appointed, the meetings of Convocation were revived, after the lapse of many years. The Lower House, on receiving the first report, adopted it as a temperate statement on the subject of ritual practice, and as calculated to clear doubts and allay anxieties ; and upon this resolution being sent to the Upper House, the Bishops conveyed to the Lower House a resolution distinctly expressing their "judgment that no alteration from long sanctioned and usual ritual ought to be made in our churches, until the sanction of the Bishop of the diocese has been obtained thereto." The Convocation of York, in full synod, March 20th, 1867, concluded that it was desirable the minister in public prayer, and in the administration of sacraments and other rites, should continue to use the surplice, the academic hood, and the scarf or stole, "these having received the sanction of long continued usage."

Circumstances fully account for so much attention being paid to vestments and candles. They were, no doubt, generally regarded as symbolical of High Church doctrine, as signs of sacramental and sacerdotal opinion ; and, viewed in that way, they pointed to what was of great importance. The doctrine, the thing signified, might well cause anxiety, and any thoroughly Protestant Church must have desired to extinguish, if possible, *principles* as well as candles, which were contrary to the Reformation of the sixteenth century ; but for a number of learned and wise men to be occupied month after month mainly, if not *merely*, with questions about candles and vestments, can scarcely appear a worthy employ-

ment of valuable time. Two Commissioners disbelieved in the doctrinal significance of the matters in question. A third report in 1870 presented a Revised Table of Lessons.

The Public Worship Regulation Act followed in 1874. Upon the controversy it is impossible to enter. But I may say, in reference to contentions about temporal and spiritual courts, and the proportion of clerical and lay members in tribunals appointed to determine Church questions, that, with all my strong objections to what is called the Erastian principle, I cannot see how it is possible for a Church united to the State, as the Church of England is, to escape from the control of civil authority. The Act of Uniformity having given the Church a peculiar position, endorsing its articles and formularies, and enforcing the use of the Prayer-Book, it is but reasonable for the State to require conformity to the law of the land. Free Churches consistently object to State control; but it is inconsistent for members of a Church not choosing such freedom as voluntary communities of right enjoy, to complain that they have not the same liberty as unendowed and unpatronized denominations.

The Regulation Act of 1874 had respect only to a circumscribed order of clerical offences, and did not take the same wide scope as the Discipline Act of 1840. Vestments, candles, rites, and ceremonies, these alone came within the range of the new statute, and it only simplified proceedings which dealt with offences respecting such matters. The Bishop, by consent of two parties taking different views of the

matter submitted to him, could give final judgment; but in the absence of consent the Bishop was to send the matter up to the Archbishop, who was to transmit it to the judge of the provincial courts. Parties to a suit were empowered to obtain the judge's opinion upon legal questions, and the Bishop's judgment was to be in conformity with that opinion. A final appeal might be made to the Queen in council.¹ After all, the lay element was only part of the authority appointed to decide the clerical question. It seems very strange to a Nonconformist that those who attach so much importance to episcopal succession and office, should object to an authority where the diocesan has so much influence, and should even set that diocesan's personal authority altogether at defiance.

The Upper House of the Southern Convocation in 1870 appointed a committee to confer with any committee appointed by the Northern Convocation, to report upon the desirableness of a revision of the Authorized version of the New Testament. The Lower House accepted the proposal, and a joint committee was appointed. The report of this committee included the following clause. "That it is desirable that Convocation should nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong." Objection was made to this proposal in the Lower House, but

¹ *State and the Church*, p. 49.

it was much more warmly supported than many expected. There were but two members who dissented from the adoption of the report. Nonconformists were invited to unite in the undertaking, and two companies were formed, one for the Old Testament, another for the New. "It is on many grounds," says one of the number, "a matter of thankfulness, that they who took the initiative in the formation of the two companies were able to secure so wide a representation of the various religious communities of our country and men belonging to different schools of religious thought."¹ It is no secret that Dr. Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, Dr. Alford, Dean of Canterbury, and Dr. Stanley, Dean of Westminster, were most active in originating the revision, and to their influence the catholic character of the undertaking is chiefly to be ascribed. Testimony has been borne, by both Episcopal and Nonconformist members, to the fraternal spirit in which discussions on important questions were carried on; and I gather, from expressions of respect and pleasure uttered on both sides, that the meetings have tended to promote the interests of charity and union. The work was completed on the 11th of November, 1880.

Owing to the large increase of population, and the interest awakened in the nation's spiritual welfare, it became needful for the Episcopal Church to make alterations in diocesan arrangements. Rochester was divided, and the new bishoprics of St. Albans and

¹ Dr. Newth on Bible Revision.

Truro were formed in 1877. To the same eminence Liverpool attained in 1880, and Newcastle in 1882.

Whilst changes went on in the arrangement of dioceses, immense activity accompanied them in the building and restoration of churches. Lord Hampton's return for the years between 1840 and 1874 shows that within thirty-four years more than twenty-five millions and a half were expended on these objects ; and the *Official Year Book* of the Church of England for 1884 gives a statement of estimated sums from 1872 to 1881 in different dioceses. In the diocese of Winchester alone, between 1820 and 1882, nearly three millions have been expended on new churches.¹ In a single year, 1882, altogether above one million was employed in ecclesiastical building and restoration.

The enormous extent of our Colonial empire and the rapid increase of emigrants called for attention, and the advance of missionary work by Church of England presbyters is another circumstance connected with those now mentioned, which led to a long series of episcopal appointments. Between 1850 and 1879 no less than *forty-one sees* were instituted in the English colonial and missionary Church.²

There were two important controversies in 1860 and 1866. The first arose out of the publication of a volume entitled *Essays and Reviews*. It was written by seven clergymen, who, it is said, proceeded on perfectly independent grounds, without

¹ *Official Year Book*, p. 17. See also pp. 26, 32.

² See *Companion to Annual Report of S.P.G.*

any concert, and who differed from each other, more or less, on theological questions. The first was a sermon upon "The Education of the World," in which a parallel was instituted between the growth of an individual man and the progress of society at large. The other six took up Bunsen's *Biblical Researches*, the Evidences of Christianity, the National Church, the Mosaic cosmogony, the Tendencies of religious thought in England, and the Interpretation of Scripture. No particular arrangement of themes was attempted, and, to say the least, the book bore a haphazard appearance, and negative criticism gave a character to the greater part of the volume.

It is a curious thing, if there was no common understanding whatever between the writers, if it was, as stated in the advertisement, simply "an attempt to illustrate the advantages derivable to the cause of moral and religious truth from a free handling, in a becoming spirit, of subjects peculiarly liable to suffer by the repetition of conventional language and from traditional methods of treatment,"—that all who were employed proceeded so much along similar negative lines, and did not any of them explicitly avow faith in certain grand truths, professed by the Church to which they belonged. Such positive teaching might have been introduced, without repeating conventional language or adopting a traditional method. Old beliefs, if not exactly pulled to pieces, were covered with a thick haze of doubtfulness; very little of constructive teaching, serving to establish religious truth, could be found in any part of the production. For a while the Book awakened no deep interest, and was

read chiefly by clerical scholars ; but the *Westminster Review* called attention to it by sympathetically appealing to the authors, as decidedly rationalistic, to proceed further, and to throw off the trammels of orthodoxy by which in the National Church they were fettered and bound. The *Quarterly Review*, excited by this circumstance, and jealous for the reputation of the Establishment, attacked the essays as "insidious," "heretical," and "atheistic." In this way the review aroused public indignation at the conduct of clergymen accused of betraying their trust ; at the same time the critique inspired so much curiosity that the sale of the volume, which had not been very considerable, rapidly increased, and it became "the book of the season." An episcopal manifesto, signed by all the Bishops, speedily followed, reflecting upon the ecclesiastical position of some of the writers, as seriously compromised by what they had ventured to publish. Convocation next discussed the subject. The Upper House censured the publication, and the Lower House, with the exception of several eminent dignitaries, thanked the Bishops for what they had done. After this a memorial, signed by about 10,000 clergymen, was presented to the Primate, condemning the essayists ; and after all this, proceedings were commenced in the Court of Arches against the offenders. The judgment delivered acquitted them of twenty-seven out of thirty-two charges, but condemned them on five points as transgressors of the law. The condemned refused to sit down under this condemnation, which however only brought with it the penalty of a year's suspension on

the offending clergymen. In 1863 they appealed to the Privy Council, where the cause was heard by the Judicial Committee. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in a charge he had delivered, and the Archbishop of York, in a volume of essays entitled *Aids to Faith*, which volume he edited, had previously shown their displeasure at the conduct of the essayists ; but now they sat on the seat of judgment to try the case. With them sat the Bishop of London, who had joined in the episcopal manifesto of 1861. This final court of appeal acquitted the accused of having violated any doctrines declared in authoritative formularies of the Church of England.

It struck many with surprise that those who, in their episcopal character, had censured the volume, should now exonerate the writers ; but the fact is that two issues had been raised, first, as to the teaching in the Essays, whether true or false, and secondly as to the conduct of the Clerical essayists in their Clerical character. The judges who, as Bishops, disapproved of the volume, because containing much that was dangerous, did not, in their judicial capacity, feel satisfied that the writers had openly denied what is taught in the Prayer-Book. As Lords of the Council, their business was not to determine what is unscriptural and untrue, but to determine whether any explicit laws had in this case been broken. But it placed the Church of England in a lamentable predicament. Lawyers, and others looking at the whole matter discriminately, might understand how that which had been done in one capacity could not be done in another ; but the public generally were not

prepared, or qualified, to make such a subtle distinction. The whole case shows to what perils theology is exposed when, instead of fair and open controversy,—appealing to the Word of God for determining what is true and right, the issue being left to private judgment,—a doctrinal dispute is carried before a legal tribunal, which decides, not according to Scripture and reason, but according to antiquated human standards of opinion. What makes the matter worse is, that temporal penalties are invoked for the suppression of spiritual misdemeanours. Far better had it been to leave *Aids to Faith* and other books, which exposed the errors of the offensive volume, to fight the battle in favour of orthodoxy, than by legal proceedings to incur the mischief of a judgment which really sanctioned, so far as ecclesiastical law is concerned, an amount of latitudinarianism very dangerous and very lamentable.

The second controversy needs less notice. Dr. Colenso, Bishop of Natal, published in 1862 a book on the Pentateuch, full of more decidedly destructive criticism than could be found in *Essays and Reviews*. It pulled the Pentateuch to pieces without constructing a history of the times to which it relates. Sceptical works of any ability are wonderfully popular in these days; and Colenso on the Pentateuch was read by everybody, as the volume by the essayists and reviewers had been before. Again the press was largely employed for the refutation of error. Many authors demolished the historical sophisms of the Bishop; but not satisfied with this, an appeal was again made to Church authorities. Colenso was

excommunicated for heresy by the Bishop of Cape-town, Dr. Gray; and in 1866 the Lower House of Convocation was requested to concur in a resolution of the Upper House to the effect: "It is the opinion of this House, that the Church of England holds communion with the Bishop of Capetown and those bishops who lately with him in Synod declared Dr. Colenso to be *ipso facto* excommunicated." The resolution was agreed to; it simply affirmed that the Bishop of Capetown and his brethren were not to be excluded from English fellowship on account of what they had done. But a further resolution was proposed, that, Dr. Colenso having been deposed, if another bishop should be elected and consecrated in his place, the Church of England should recognize that bishop and hold communion with him. This led to a long debate, which entered upon the legal grounds of the bishop's deposition. That deposition however was set aside on an appeal to the Privy Council, and the council of the Colonial Bishops Fund was compelled to continue the payment of his income. The result was that the Anglican community at the Cape broke up into two camps, and when Colenso visited England in 1879, he was inhibited from preaching in the dioceses of Oxford, Lincoln, and London.

Notwithstanding the great improvement of the Episcopal Church, there remained in it evils which exasperated its foes and distressed its friends. Amongst things most condemned and deplored were the sale of livings and the existence of clerical scandals. To leave appointments to the cure of souls

in the hands of persons who might be, and often were, uninfluenced by religious motives in the presentations they made, was manifestly inconsistent with the purposes of Christianity ; and of course misconduct in clergymen still retaining their incumbencies reflected discredit on the communion to which they belonged. Ecclesiastical reformers sought to remove these evils, but found insurmountable obstacles in the way. For as the Church sustained its present relation to the State, and pastoral office was identical with a benefice, which in the eye of the law is pecuniary property, transactions of the kind complained of seemed to be unavoidable. The spiritual oversight of Christ's sheep naturally became merged in a secular possession of tithes and glebes ; and hence arose the practice of bargain and sale, as if such things had been like farms and houses. The occurrence of misconduct in men devoted to a sacred calling, is one of the results of human degeneracy, seen more or less in all denominations, but it is vastly aggravated where the secular aspects of life gain an ascendancy over such as are spiritual. To check the evil discipline is necessary ; here however secular interests again create an obstacle. To deprive a clergyman was not merely to remove him from office, but to deprive him of "a living" ; and therefore to guard the temporal support of an incumbent, legal barriers had been built up around him. Bishops know, to their sorrow, how difficult it is to strip a clergyman of his gown. Free Churches, in a few cases, have found trouble enough in dismissing an unworthy pastor ; but this is nothing compared with

what has happened in well-known instances of clerical delinquency. The indelibility of orders, as held by some Anglicans, came in aid of the mischief. "Once a priest, always a priest," is a maxim which creates an enormous hindrance to the exercise of discipline. When such things have prevented reform, and have checked aspirations after order and adaptation in carrying forward ministerial work, it has been complained, by dignitaries themselves, that we must look for nothing from bishops, nor from Convocation, nor from the clergy, nor from the Houses of Parliament. Inability or indisposition has been discovered in every direction ; but it may be hoped that some improvement as to the sale of livings will be effected by the select committee on the subject, which has published its report just as the last pages of this volume were passing through the press.

SECTION II.

NONCONFORMITY.

IN 1858 a measure for the abolition of Church rates passed the Commons, but was rejected by the Lords. In 1860 the same thing was repeated. A final settlement of the question followed in 1868, by the substitution of voluntary for compulsory rates, a measure showing an advance in the application of willingness to the maintenance of religious worship.

An elaborate plan for the improvement of elementary education was submitted to Parliament by Her Majesty's ministers in 1870, and the religious difficulty, as it was called, immediately cropped up and occasioned much discussion. Religion and education are so closely connected, that Churchmen and Dissenters acknowledged the fact ; but how the interests of each class were to be consulted without violating rights of conscience formed a problem which had to be worked out, and it was not likely to be worked out only in one way. Government was aware of discrepancies in opinion on the subject, and professed a wish to meet, as far as possible, the demands of both parties. Most Church people considered that

religious instruction must be blended with that which is secular, and many of them thought that a denominational character must be given to school instruction. They had established National schools conducted strictly on Church principles, and they claimed large Government grants on their behalf. Dissenters, on the other hand, had before this, in their educational work, whether conducted on the British and Foreign School principle, or according to some particular plan of their own, united the teaching of undenominational Christianity with other branches of knowledge. Further, the Independents had established a board of education which insisted on the union, and connected the branches together. Government endeavoured to cut the knot of the religious difficulty, first, by continuing assistance to denominational schools where a conscience clause was adopted, and children were not compelled to do anything in the way of religious instruction or observance objected to by their parents; and secondly, by establishing board schools, in which secular instruction only was to be given, religious instruction being left to voluntary efforts. Many Dissenters, looking at the question all round, fell in with the Government scheme for providing secular instruction *apart from what is religious*. They saw no other way of reconciling the supply of a great national want with conscientious principles peculiar to themselves. A separation of the two elements which they had before opposed appeared to them now, not matter of choice, but matter of necessity; others however adhered consistently to the principle previously avowed, that they would neither dis-

connect religion from daily school work, nor would they accept Government help in any form whatever.

It was not unnatural that differences respecting education should get mixed up with differences of opinion as to establishments: the Churchman looking at the question through the medium of his State Church views; the Dissenter looking at it through the medium of his *anti*-State Church convictions. Many Churchmen thought that Dissenters were aiming to upset the Establishment; and many Dissenters believed that Churchmen were anxious to get all the children of the country under their control, in order to make them Church people. Whether or not the Bible should be used in board schools became a main moot point. A declaration was largely signed by ministers of voluntary Churches, protesting against the exclusion of the Scriptures from schools created by the new measure. The question in time settled itself practically, in some cases by separate arrangements for religious instruction, the Bible not being used in the board school; in most cases however the simple reading of Scripture was allowed *at school time*, supplementary training being provided in Sunday schools and other ways. There were not wanting Dissenters who firmly adhered to their former practice, and continued to support denominational or British schools by school fees and subscriptions, without accepting any Government grant whatever.

Repeated endeavours were made to extend to Nonconformists a fuller enjoyment of advantages at

Cambridge and Oxford. In 1871 the University Tests Bill came before the Lords, who had previously opposed the measure; but now, through pressure from without, they felt compelled to look more favourably at the matter. A committee was appointed to examine a number of persons interested in the subject on both sides. Dissenters as well as Churchmen gave evidence on points which bore upon the main question, and after an earnest and able debate the bill became an act, and it was declared that the universities "shall be freely accessible to the nation." Lay academical degrees and lay academical offices at Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham were thrown open, without submission to any test or formulary whatever. College headship, divinity professorship, and clerical fellowship however remained inaccessible to those who were not members of the Established Church.

A Dissenting grievance remained, in exclusion from burial in churchyard. "The Church," it has been remarked, "claimed no jurisdiction over the graves of her Nonconformist brethren, but every parish burial place was hers. The churchyard in which many generations of Churchmen slept was no less sacred than the village church itself; yet here only could the Dissenter find his last resting place. Having renounced the communion of the Church while living, he was restored to it in death. The last offices of Christian burial were performed over him in consecrated ground by the clergyman of the parish and according to the ritual of the Church. Nowhere was the painfulness of schism more deeply felt on either

side."¹ In Ireland exclusion of Dissenters from burial in churchyard, by their own ministers, had been removed in the reign of George IV.; but the miserable disability lingered on in England down to the year 1880, all previous attempts for its removal having been in vain. An act was passed that year, permitting burial in churchyards either "without any religious service, or with such Christian and orderly religious service" at the grave, as the person responsible might think fit. The act proceeded on the principle that as burial is a necessity for persons of all classes, the churchyard, where alone in many instances it could take place, belongs to the nation and not to any particular denomination; at the same time care was taken to fence off such irregularities and scandals as would distress mourners or shock the feelings of Christian people. Endeavours to bring into contempt or obloquy the Christian religion, or the belief or worship of any denomination of Christians, were forbidden under penalty of being guilty of a misdemeanour.

Whilst Dissenting grievances were being removed, the Establishment, which lay at their root, remained, and this fact kept its hold on the minds of many earnest men. One evil after another was suppressed, and so far popular arguments against the system,—such arguments as laid hold powerfully on the public mind,—were silenced; but people accustomed to trace branches to their roots, and who thought more of principles than of practices lying on the top

¹ May's *Constitutional History*, vol. iii. p. 194.

of them, did not feel satisfied with leaving matters just as they were. Right or wrong is not the question here; whether such persons are to be regarded as impracticable or not is a matter which leaves the simple fact untouched; namely, that between 1850 and 1880 there was a growing tendency in many quarters to look below the surface and penetrate to what is fundamental. Organizations were formed with a view to disestablishment, and without entering into details beyond those already given, it should be stated that first an Anti-State Church Association and then a Liberation Society came into existence. They both proceeded on the same lines, but the second advanced farther than the first. Its object is thus succinctly expressed in the society's programme: "The abrogation of all laws and usages which inflict disability or confer privilege on ecclesiastical grounds upon any subjects of the realm; the discontinuance of all payments from public funds and of all compulsory exactions for religious purposes. After an equitable satisfaction of existing interests, the application to other than ecclesiastical purposes, of the national property now devoted to the uses of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, and concurrently therewith the liberation of those Churches from State control." A primary rule adopted was that the proposed object should be pursued "without reference to sectarian or party distinctions"—a rule capable of being explained differently by different persons; amongst modes of action, in addition to the press and public meetings, mention is made of organizations to exert

influence on the public mind and on Parliament, and of urging the duty of acquiring and exerting electoral power for the return to Parliament of men of integrity, favourable to the society's principles and willing to advocate them.

The disestablishment of the Irish Church, in its home character and details, and in its effect upon the religious interests of the sister isle, does not come within the range of our present glance. But notice for a moment may be taken of its influence upon the Church and State question in our own country. It bore with obvious directness upon the matter in reference to Wales and Scotland. The fact of the Irish Church being in a minority was a sheet anchor for arguments urged by those who advocated the measure. It was unreasonable and unjust, they said, to support an establishment whose members were outnumbered by Nonconformists. If the argument was good for Ireland, it was applicable wherever a similar relation in point of numbers could be shown to exist; and a most important point in the history of the argument is this, that many Churchmen who promoted disestablishment abandoned the old ground, that it is the duty of the Government to provide religious instruction for the people, according to its own convictions of truth and moral obligation. This had been much insisted upon, even by some foremost in advocating Irish disestablishment; but in the critical moment of deciding the business practically, they removed the debate out of the sacred circle, where it had deeply impressed the minds of many religious men. They broke down the ancient

inclosure, and threw open the matter to be determined by a majority of votes. This helped on the anti-State movement, and increased the argumentative strength of its zealous friends.

Dissenters have ever advocated—consistently they cannot do otherwise—the most perfect freedom in forming and expressing their sentiments ; and therefore the movements described in a previous part of this history and those which came afterwards were not regarded in the same light by all who dissented from the Church of England. Perhaps few remained in the middle of this century whose Nonconformity arose simply from objections to some parts of the Prayer-Book, or to the office of diocesan bishops, or to the use of a liturgy, or to the wearing of particular vestments, or to signing with the cross in baptism and kneeling at the altar rails in the communion of the Lord's Supper. Scruples on these points no doubt continued more or less, but the field of argument stretched into wider dimensions. Yet however wide, religious considerations stood prominently in the front ; political aspects were not shut out, the spiritual rose above the rest. The object was not so much “religious equality,” the lifting up of despised Dissent to a higher social level, but the object was to maintain the spirituality, freedom, and independence of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, to proclaim what, in old fashioned terms, might be called His Crown Rights, to exercise discipline unembarrassed by State law in the fellowship of professed believers, and to have ministers chosen and supported by their flocks, without the interposition

of patronage in any form. These were the ends proposed in chief, and they were regarded as closely connected with evangelical religion, with the maintenance of its distinctive truths and the discharge of its distinctive duties. Not a few felt that these ends ought to be put first and foremost in the great Nonconformist controversy ; that to keep them in abeyance to political attacks was to descend from a vantage ground ; that to unite in opposing the Establishment with persons, however able and influential, who, if they did not treat religious sentiments as fanatical, looked upon them as utterly insignificant, was to get into entanglements which would only impair the efficiency of what ought to be a holy war—it was to clothe Nonconformity with armour which it had not proved. However some might laugh at it, such men as I have just described preferred David's shepherd-sling and smooth stones out of the brook, to any suit of mail in the tent of Saul. Moreover, in a proposed alliance with persons having no religious sympathy with them, they did not choose to make themselves responsible for things likely to be said which they could not approve.

The movement of Protestant Nonconformists as such, in their *collective capacity*, on any other than religious grounds seemed to the persons now described as undesirable ; though of course it was left to *individuals* to join with others as they pleased in promoting disestablishment for political and social reasons,—reasons which exist outside the bounds of the strictly ecclesiastical controversy.

These are the simple facts of the case. Considera-

tions of various kinds thus served to keep aloof from movements just indicated, ministers rooted as firmly in Dissenting convictions as any of their brethren could be ; and this moreover should be distinctly noted, that such differences of policy did not throw Independents or Baptists into angry conflict among themselves, did not create hostile camps, did not break down ancient friendships.

Church and State controversy has of late entered upon a new phase by resistance made to State authority on the part of High Churchmen, by their demand for disestablishment on grounds of their own,—not because of abstract objections to State endowments, or of zeal for religious equality, but because they hope to obtain freedom to do as they please in their own Romanizing modes of worship. It is instructive, as well as curious, to compare with each other Radicals old and new. It is not less so to place side by side Nonconformists and their allies of past generations with those who now occupy the field. Their tactics, their flags, their regimentals are different. Externally the state of things has changed ; yet still, it must be remembered that a large number of those who take part in the political movements referred to are mainly influenced by principles such as swayed their ecclesiastical fathers.

A celebration occurred in the year 1862 which called public attention to the subject of Nonconformity, and it served to strengthen the faith and zeal of its adherents. Two hundred years previously, the Act of Uniformity had been passed, and a large number of Puritan clergymen had been ejected. The

Bicentenary commemoration of this event was objected to by many as likely "to rip up old grievances," to disinter what had better be left under the gravestone of oblivion. "Nobody," they said, "was responsible for what was done in 1662, and the less said about it the better." "Let the dead bury their dead," sang one of our poets, and these words breathed the feeling of some people twenty-two years ago. However vast numbers did not think so; Dissenters generally took up the matter with earnestness, and there were clergymen also who did honour to the men whose conscience compelled them to relinquish their livings. The same clergymen lamented the strictness of the Uniformity Act as a great mistake.

Early in the year preparations commenced for an historical and religious observance of the 24th of August. A Bartholomew committee was formed, consisting of Independents, Baptists, and Presbyterians. The press was set to work, a number of publications were issued, so that in a few months people became better acquainted with what took place at the restoration of Charles II. than ever they had been before. Of course there was much said on the other side. The *Quarterly Review* brought out its guns, and fired them on modern Puritanism. Numerous other periodicals joined in what was considered to be only an act of self defence. No doubt in some quarters the Establishment met with bold, if not bitter attacks, but in other quarters happily the occasion was improved for exhibiting heroes of the past as examples of fidelity to conscience and of self-sacrifice in what they believed to be the cause of truth.

On St. Bartholomew's Day sermons adapted to the occasion were preached all over the country. Harvest joys mingled with memories of men long before gathered into the Lord's garner. Thankful recollections of devout services that day, unembittered by political or party strife, continue to this hour. Wales, which had suffered much from the Act of Uniformity, now rejoiced in the freedom of religious worship possessed by children of the mountain and forest, the valley and the lake ; and glad were they to hear the old story told, not in the tongue of the Saxon, but in the loved speech of their mother-land. In Ireland, too, commemorations were held, and the sympathy reached our Canadian and Australian colonies.

Passing from statements relative to Nonconformity in general, a cursory glance may be taken of what went on in particular denominations. Independents made a special use of the occasion just referred to. Two objects were accomplished—first, the erection of the Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street ; and secondly, the collecting of a fund to assist in chapel building and other religious undertakings.

In 1878 there arose an unprecedented debate at the meeting of the Congregational Union. It had been alleged in a few cases, and suspected in others, that an unsettlement of theological opinion in the country had affected the teaching of Congregational ministers. It was thought desirable by the committee, that a resolution expressive of continued attachment to cardinal doctrines of the gospel should be presented to the assembly ; and the result proved that

the committee were justified in a conviction that such a resolution would be satisfactorily received. The Declaration of Faith and Order to which I have referred¹ had never been regarded as a test, but as a manifesto of fact, stating evangelical principles held at the time when the declaration was published. Any attempt to reaffirm those principles in words accepted fifty years before, after various influences had touched theological thought during the interim, would have been unwise, though a deep persuasion existed that, substantially, doctrines asserted by the Congregational fathers were held by a large majority of their sons. The united profession of a few fundamental doctrines at a time when misconceptions or doubts obtained, was considered to be a very different thing from subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, or to the Westminster Confession, or to the Declaration of Faith and Order. The proposal produced a discussion, which elicited differences of opinion, and earnestness was manifested ; but the speeches were free from personalities, and at last an overwhelming majority appeared in favour of orthodox avowals. But there were some, whose zeal for orthodoxy could not be impeached, who regarded a public debate as by no means the best method of obtaining either a knowledge of truth, or the best expression of it. They would have preferred a meeting consecrated to an endeavour after higher spiritual life, the seeking of the Holy Spirit for illumination and strength, the deepening of evangelical convictions where they

¹ See p. 106 of this vol.

existed, and the re-inspiration of them where they had begun to fade.

In 1881 the Congregational Union attained its fiftieth year, and according to the fashion of the times celebrated a jubilee. A course of lectures bearing on Nonconformist topics was delivered in the Memorial Hall, London, and the constitution of the Union having been revised so as to consolidate its affairs by bringing County organizations into closer organic relationship with the central committee, a fund in aid of poor Churches was set on foot, and assistance in chapel building, with other operations for the spread of the gospel, further marked this occasion of thankfulness for the goodness of God.

The third quarter of this century's history was signalized amongst Independents by extraordinary efforts for the improvement of their colleges. New College, St. John's Wood, London,—arising out of an amalgamation of old institutions already described,—was opened in 1851. Spring Hill College, just built near Birmingham, was opened in 1856. The opening of a new college at Plymouth, for the west of England, followed in 1861. Then came an enlargement at Cheshunt College in 1871, which was succeeded by the completion of new structures at Rotherham in 1876 and at Airedale in 1877. Lancashire College, Manchester, founded in 1843, received a magnificent addition in 1876. Two additional institutes for the training of young men devoted to home missionary work were established since 1850 at Nottingham and Bristol.

The Baptist denomination during a little more

than the same space of time has also commendably attended to the subject of education. A college belonging to the General Baptists, removed to Chilwell, Nottinghamshire, in 1861, has been since removed for greater efficiency to Nottingham in 1883. A Baptist theological institution, founded first at Bury in 1866, was removed to Manchester, and carried forward on a higher scale, in 1873. The Pastors' College, commenced at Camberwell in 1856, was removed to the Metropolitan Tabernacle in 1861, since which time it has greatly increased. Rawdon College, near Leeds, in 1859 took the place of Horton College at Bradford; and Regent's Park College is a transfer of the old Stepney Academy to a more eligible site, under improved auspices. A new spirit has come over the denomination within the last thirty years. At the commencement of that period a broad line could be drawn between the Particular, or Calvinistic, and the General, or Arminian, Baptists. The doctrinal division was distinctly manifest. It consisted in a difference which had been very great for more than two centuries. Two principles, the one resting on the doctrine of election, the other resting on its denial, stood face to face in theological antagonism. To most outsiders, that question appeared much more important than the difference between immersion and effusion, or between the baptism of an adult and the baptism of a child; but the old distinction between the two classes of Baptists seems now nearly obliterated. The Baptist Missionary Society, born at Kettering, still maintains its original position; so does the later born

General Baptist Mission. The Particular Baptist Fund still exists alone, and there is also a Baptist Building Fund, which preserves now, as before, the Calvinistic creed. And, as I have stated, the General Baptists have an educational institute of their own at Nottingham, and there remains a General Baptist periodical, as well as the old magazine established by men who were anti-Arminians. But the union between the two classes is rendered more obvious than the previous difference. London has its Baptist Association for several useful and important practical purposes, and this so includes under its wing the two old classifications that it is difficult to distinguish the one from the other. Members of both sections appear in the same list, and they co-operate in the erection of new chapels year by year. This has been going on for several years. Besides this, the Association of General Baptists is now embodied within the organization of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, established in 1864. A dislike to centralization has formidably checked certain aspirations; but a sentiment in favour of unity and the carrying on of work together has been steadily advancing. Leading men have wrought hard to bring the centrifugal and centripetal forces into harmonious action. It may be remarked as a curious fact, that whilst the doctrinal distinction between Calvinism and Arminianism is effaced, to a very great measure at least, in the Baptist Union for home, the distinction remains asserted in the titles of two organizations for work abroad; for we have Particular Baptist Missions and General Baptist Missions.

The old discord too between strict and open communion has been dying out. The controversy, so vigorous once between Hall and Kinghorn, has long been quiet. Open communion Churches have far outstripped in number close communion ones. Distinctive Baptist Churches have not admitted to full membership persons unbaptized by immersion, but they have welcomed such to the Lord's table ; and, in cases where they have been prevented by legal difficulties from going so far as this, they have claimed and exercised the right of having a separate observance for brethren differing from them on the subject of baptism. A celebrated trial—that of St. Mary's Chapel at Norwich—settled the admissibility of the latter practice in a case where full open communion would have been illegal.

The ancient, and once the leading section of the "three denominations," under the name of the Presbyterian Board, after its separation in 1836, continued a corporate existence, and, as I have shown, obtained for itself the privilege of separately addressing the sovereign, a right which it has not failed to exercise ever since on all suitable occasions. The body, though comparatively small, has not been inactive, and has had its anniversaries and assemblies for the maintenance and diffusion of its own views. The principal college for the body was removed from Manchester to London in 1857, under the principaship of Dr. Martineau.

The new body of English Presbyterians, who succeeded the old one as an integral part of the three denominations at the time of the rupture, is composed

of pastors and ministers connected with orthodox Scotch congregations; and the Scotch Presbyterian body in England altogether has gradually covered a wider area than it did in former days. Some congregations have continued in communion with the United Presbyterian Church, others with the Established Church of Scotland.

Another party, as stated before, having sympathised with the Scotch Church in her struggles for spiritual independence, and formed a Church in sisterly communion with the Free Church, has perpetuated its existence by continuing steadily to walk in the old paths of Scotch orthodoxy and evangelicalism. It has promoted the interests of religion by its theological college in London, by its home mission work in different parts of England, and by the erection of numerous chapels in London and the country. "Its China mission has been crowned with a special blessing and increasing success."

Proceedings conducted by Methodist bodies are too ramified for distinct specification in this sketch. The Wesleyans, true to their time-honoured reputation for self-sacrificing liberality and vigorous action, have, during the last thirty years, almost surpassed themselves by the sums they have raised for various purposes. Their resources are not to be compared with those of the Episcopal Church, their members are mostly of the middle class, and of the class below it; and yet in 1863 they held a jubilee of the Foreign Missionary Society, when over £250,000 was raised. In 1878 a thanksgiving fund followed, amounting to £290,000, as an expression of gratitude for the good-

ness of God in preserving the peace and unity of the connexion. Before those munificent gifts were poured into the treasury there had been, in 1862, a metropolitan chapel fund established, in consequence of which the number of first-class chapels in London and suburbs has risen to about sixty. The Fernley Lecture commenced in 1876, which has already produced more than ordinarily valuable theological literature; the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday-school Union, founded in 1874; and the appointment of district missionaries in 1875,—since which time many have been added to the original staff,—are plans of usefulness which supplant others of previous date.

The fund of 1878 has a special significance. The peace and unity thus celebrated bring to mind by way of contrast controversies described in some chapters of these volumes. At the bottom we see a conflict between ministerial and lay elements. They were harmonized in 1877. A system of lay representation was then devised; and the next year it came into operation. A "mixed conference," so called, was to consist of 240 ministers and 240 laymen. After repeated strifes in former years, this salutary change was accomplished without the loss of one single ministerial or lay member.

Other divisions of Methodism have also yielded service in gifts and other ways, according to their several ability; and a memorable convention, entitled the *Œcumical Conference*, composed of delegates from divers parts of the world, assembled in City Road Chapel, London, on the 7th of September, 1881. It included representatives of the following English

sections: The Wesleyan, the New Connexion, the Primitives, the United Free Churches, the Reform Union, and Bible Christians.¹ A spirit of harmony and love pervaded all the meetings.

¹ Published statistics of the different bodies, for which I have not room, show a considerable increase of late years.

SECTION III.

EXTRAORDINARY RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

A METHOD of preaching the gospel in what some thought extraordinary and even irregular ways commenced in the middle of the present century. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was a wonderful event as to its moral and religious associations. On the 1st of May a spirit seemed to come over the public in the Palace of glass such as betokened the opening of a millennium. If ever sincere worship was offered to Almighty God in connexion with art, science, and human industry, it was then. The moral and religious tone of the newspaper press that morning cannot be forgotten. Availing themselves of the national temper at that time, a number of good men obtained the use of Exeter Hall for services during the Exhibition. Sunday after Sunday multitudes crowded up from the Strand, and only early comers could obtain accommodation or even admission. Plain, earnest sermons were delivered, which made a deep impression.

Churches, chapels, and perhaps schoolrooms had been regarded as the only proper places for Divine

worship and instruction. During times of persecution, preaching in all sorts of unconsecrated spots had been deemed allowable ; out-door ministrations by Whitefield and Wesley, a hundred years before, when religion was so generally neglected, could be pardoned ; but to open buildings employed during the week for pleasure or business struck many persons as quite unnecessary. But the Exeter Hall services proved a success. The vastness of the multitudes aroused sympathy of a pleasurable kind, and the effect of the sermons was multiplied by the number of those who listened to them. What thus occurred was no passing wonder ; a new epoch in modern English preaching commenced at that era.

About four years afterwards the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, now known throughout Protestant Christendom, engaged the hall for four months, and filled it to overflowing ; not long afterwards another extraordinary, and as it was thought irregular movement, was accomplished at the Surrey Music Hall, with the same success.

A company of gentlemen, encouraged by the result of these unprecedented efforts, afterwards reopened Exeter Hall as a place for worship and preaching on several Sunday nights. Certain clergymen and Dissenting ministers were willing to unite in this enterprise, but a difficulty occurred through the interference of an incumbent of the parish, who objected to such ministrations in the locality as intrusive. Consequently the services fell into Dissenting hands, so far as related to preaching ; but some well-known Churchmen attended the gatherings, sat

on the platform, and repeated responses in that part of the liturgy which the Nonconformist preachers, by request, willingly used on these occasions.

The desire for such services increased. Not satisfied with the use of Exeter Hall, several gentlemen provided preachers for St. James' Hall, Piccadilly, where for some years audiences filled the floor, the orchestra, and the galleries. Many who attended were no doubt members of regular congregations, yet there were many others present who had been accustomed to neglect religion altogether.

Zealous agents in this enterprise went further still, and startled the religious world by engaging theatres for an evangelical crusade. The stage became a pulpit, and a crowd of the lower class might be seen in the pit and the gallery ; whilst other persons, some as critics and spectators, occupied the boxes. Some of the former indeed made noisy demonstrations, and tore papers in pieces,—amusing themselves with the eddying fragments. But lively singing brought the roughs into order, and when the sermon came it was heard with respectful attention. Results were to some extent ascertained, and they were encouraging.

Extraordinary services, conducted by Messrs. Moody and Sankey, from America, followed the commencement of preaching in large secular buildings. They remained for a long time on a visit to this country, and returned home in 1873. Another visit attracted more attention, on account of the extent of accommodation provided. The Italian Opera House in the Haymarket was crowded with

auditors, and the Princess of Wales attended on one occasion.

The Salvation Army appeared later, and proceeded on a different line. This new movement created a distinct and elaborate organization of its own, being not, properly speaking, ecclesiastical at all, resembling neither Episcopal nor Presbyterian nor Congregational fellowships, but adopting military names, which have in themselves no religious signification whatever.

Another new phenomenon in the way of worship and preaching stands quite apart from the rest. What commenced at St. Paul's Cathedral can best be described by the words used at the close of its history by Dean Milman :—

“The first light of a new day arose from the wish to render the cathedral more available for its primary object, the worship of God ! With this aim in view the Bishop of London had addressed a communication to the dean and chapter, urging upon them the advisability of instituting a series of special evening services for the benefit of those large masses of the people whom it might be impossible to attract in any other way. Dean Milman, in his own name and that of the chapter, replied to the bishop on Feb. 1st, 1858. After expressing their ‘earnest, unanimous, and sincere desire to co-operate to the utmost of their power in the promotion of religious worship and the preaching of the word of God in the metropolis, especially as regards those classes for which such services are more particularly designed,’ the letter goes on to discuss the practicability of the plan and the best methods of carrying it out, pointing out at the same time the difficulties which would in-

inevitably arise from a scantiness of the funds which could be applied to such a purpose.”¹

Under Dr. Trench, who was Dean of Westminster Abbey from 1856 to 1864, Sunday evening services during a few months of the year were conducted in that ancient place of worship, and have been carried on there from summer to summer ever since.

¹ *Annals of St. Paul's*, p. 495.

SECTION IV.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

NOT long afterwards there appeared lines running in an unusual direction within circles of religious life, and, though of a private nature and little known to any except those who came within their folds, they ought not to be left in oblivion. It is often overlooked, in thinking of times which followed the restoration of Charles II., that amidst angry controversy and cruel persecution some Nonconformists, who had occupied high positions during the Commonwealth, were not excluded from social intercourse with the dignitaries of the Church of England. When that generation had passed away, matters in this respect became greatly altered, and it was rare for even Dissenting ministers of learning to be on terms of friendship with Episcopalian brethren. During the first half of this century the alienation continued, and perhaps increased, except when doctrinal sympathy brought together a few Evangelical clergymen and like-minded neighbours of different communions. But in the year 1867 Dean Alford called public

attention to the subject, with the hope of producing some improvement.

“Nothing,” he said in an address on *Christian Conscience*, delivered at Glasgow in the December of that year, “nothing is more strongly impressed on my mind, when I look over the religious state of England, than that we, who are members of her Established Church, have need to face the whole important question of our relations to Nonconformists, with a view to a re-adjustment in the light of the Christian conscience of our words and our acts respecting them. There is a very wide basis of doctrine, there is a still wider basis of Christian morality, on which we are absolutely at one. As far as those bases extend, our aim is identical. We may not be able to work together: our instruments may be different; our tastes may be incompatible. Allow the utmost force to these considerations; and the utmost force also to the consideration that our very differences are themselves points of conscience, and that we are bound to stand up for them, and not to merge nor compromise them: still, allowing all this, it seems to me that there is no justification for the present alienation of affection, the present virtual suspension of intercourse, the present depreciating tone and manner which prevail on the part of English Churchmen towards Dissenters and towards Churches which differ from ourselves in organization.” “We have, I conceive, a curious example of the perversion of conscience in the English Church, in the fact that a large and increasing party of her members are at this time agitating for union and intercommunion with the Roman and Eastern Churches, from both of which we are separated by important doctrinal differences; that this desire for union is justified by them on the most solemn grounds, as furnished by the words of our Lord’s own intercessory prayer: and yet that no mention whatever is made of any desire for union, on the basis of mutual

allowance of differences, with our Christian brethren in the British islands.”¹

This passage prepared for an article on *The Union of Christendom* in a number of *The Contemporary* for the February following. The article evinced a strong desire to cultivate friendly relations with Nonconformist brethren. In connexion with this he touched on the subject of opening pulpits in the Establishment to those who were not episcopally ordained. He is supposed by some to have gone farther than he actually did. He approached the matter with caution and reserve, and only suggested conditions on which such an arrangement might be possible, adding, “It may not be amiss to have at least indicated a desire that it should be in some cases given. I have read Nonconformist sermons, which have begotten in me the wish that they could have been delivered to our congregations, and could have served both to stimulate our somewhat languid preaching, and to set us an example of earnest and at the same time careful thought.”

The Dean united deeds with words, and it is only necessary here to state that social gatherings followed, both in Canterbury and London, in which Episcopalian and other ministers mingled on equal terms, with pleasant results. Dr. Stanley earnestly joined in promoting these friendly relations. No one did so much as he to bring together persons of different communions; and under the touch of his warm and

¹ *Essays and Addresses.* By Henry Alford, D.D., Dean of Canterbury, pp. 65 and 68.

comprehensive sympathy, prejudice and bigotry, at least for a time, melted entirely away. Congregations who only saw him, as, with bent head, downcast eyes, and slow and reverent step, he walked up to the pulpit stair, could not picture what he was as he came forward at home with rapid movement, and with smiles irradiating his finely chiselled features, to grasp the hands of Nonconformist guests, bidding them a welcome which glowed with genuine heartiness. Such interviews did more to promote unaffected union than public meetings and platform speeches.

The idea of arranging for occasional service in State churches by non-Episcopalian ministers formed no prominent topic of discussion in these gatherings, yet the subject laid hold on a few ardent minds. In the summer of 1871 Mr. Cowper Temple, now Lord Mount Temple, brought before the House of Commons a bill "to enable incumbents, with the approval and consent of the Archbishop, or Bishop of the Diocese, to admit to the pulpits of their parish churches persons not in holy orders of the Church of England for the purpose of delivering occasional sermons or lectures." The desire was to give power to bishops and incumbents to allow an approved Dissenting minister, or any qualified and approved layman, to preach occasionally in parochial and other sacred edifices. The measure did not touch the Act of Uniformity, it only provided for a case not included within its provisions; namely, the delivery of a discourse such as would not interfere with the usual daily service. All the author of the bill seems to

have wished was an admission that preaching in a church belonging to the Establishment is not exclusively a clergyman's function.

The proposal, in previous discussions on the subject, excited no deep feeling, and the bill found few to favour it. From different causes Churchmen and Dissenters either opposed it or treated it with indifference; therefore it fell to the ground. The question whether clergymen could legally preach in Nonconformist chapels was also mooted; but Counsel's opinion being taken, and found unfavourable, the project was dropped. Some action in reference to the matter was taken by the courageous Dean of Westminster, who instituted in the abbey a short course of lectures on St. Andrew's Day, devoted to prayer for the Divine blessing on missionary work; and these lectures were delivered at his invitation by a layman of the Church of England, a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, two clergymen of the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and two Independent ministers. Christian union was also promoted by the highest dignitary of the Church. Archbishop Tait occupied a position somewhat similar to Dr. Tillotson. The latter had cherished friendships with men who were his fellow-students at Cambridge, and were afterwards decided anti-Episcopalians; and the former never cast off early Scotch acquaintances, however steadfast they might be in Presbyterian principles. Hence both Primates were objects of unjust attacks on the part of High Churchmen, whilst towards them the one and the other manifested a spirit of exemplary forbearance and charity.

Dr. Tait, in friendly intercourse with Nonconformists, aimed at promoting a *modus vivendi* between different Churches, whose distinct existence, it is to the Christian and social interest of all parties to regard as an accomplished fact. In one of the addresses he delivered to the clergy and churchwardens of the diocese of Canterbury in 1872, he made the following remarks :

“It is a grave and important subject for us to consider, that, while men are holding out the right hand of fellowship to the Episcopal Churches of the continent, there are many of our own brethren at home from whom we are estranged. Every effort which can be made to unite us more truly in the bonds of Christian love with these our brethren at home seems to come to us recommended by something more practical than is found in efforts to unite with foreigners, many of whom show little inclination to admit us to their fellowship, and some of whom could not admit us without our denying the great principles of our reformed Church. I am no visionary, looking forward to the time when all the various denominations throughout Britain are to come and desire admission into the Church of England ; but still I think if we persevere in the loving, faithful discharge of our duty, if we adhere faithfully to the formularies which we have received from the time of the Reformation, and if we show in all things where we can, without any compromise of principle, a hearty spirit of Christian love, there is every hope that in Christ’s good time the differences that keep us apart may disappear.”

Some time afterwards the Archbishop expressed a readiness to meet his Dissenting brethren in the way of religious conference after a manner likely to promote union for a practical end ; and he was anxious that other members of the Episcopate should unite

with him for this purpose. Accordingly a meeting took place at Lambeth, when a number of bishops and Nonconformist ministers spent a gratifying day in discussion relative to the following points :

“To what extent have we to believe that materialistic and atheistic theories are making way in this country? How can we best meet the infidelity and scepticism of the age? And further, how is existing ignorance and indifference respecting religion to be removed, and different classes of the community brought under the power of the gospel?”

To this conference the Archbishop referred in a charge delivered afterwards :

“The subject on which we freely conferred was the best method of meeting an enemy to whose dangerous assaults we are all at this time alive—the best mode of resisting the approaches of an insidious and dangerous infidelity. Such meetings of men, face to face, where they may speak their minds freely, and learn better to judge of each other, can, I think, be fraught with nothing but real good. We are all members of this great English nation ; we all have our duties to perform as citizens ; moreover, we all profess the faith of Christ. It is well for us to understand each other, and if we are conscientiously convinced that our paths must be widely asunder, still there will be nothing but good from our rightly understanding each other’s sentiments and characters.”

No one was more convinced than he, that efforts to bring Nonconformist bodies back to the Establishment are utterly useless ; but no one could be more anxious to manifest towards them the most kindly relations. His dignified urbanity, his catholic friendships, and his deep sympathy with brethren in their sorrows, are eminently worthy of historical record.

SECTION V.

THEOLOGICAL OPINIONS.

A CHANGE wide and deep came over the domain of religious thought during the middle of this century. It was a change different from any one before. It presented phenomena of a startling kind, breaking down old hedges and defacing old landmarks, so that in now walking the theological round we hardly know where we are.

To construct a map exhibiting the *existing* continents and islands of opinion is a work which baffles one,—there are so many intersecting lines, so many cross currents, so many points where waters meet. Or, to change the figure, instead of distinct plantations, each containing trees of a certain sort, each obviously different from others, there is being carried on, all around, a perplexing method of theological horticulture. New buds, new fruits are engrafted on old stems, once thought incapable of bearing such productions. Evangelical growths have appeared on High Church standards ; they have been seen, too, on the top of rationalistic stocks. Several years ago books began to be written and sermons to be preached, in which High Churchmen exhibited salvation by grace

through faith, without merit, very much as Methodists were accustomed to do, and they enforced the necessity of conversion, calling sinners to the cross of Christ, that they might find free redemption through His blood. Further, they insisted upon the work of the Spirit as essential to the origin and sustenance of Christian life, and needful for the success of Christian effort.

At the same time there arose men who were unchurchly, who could not accept certain portions of venerable creeds, who were penetrated with rationalistic habits of thought, who clung to the notion of a verifying faculty, and whose theology altogether was subjective rather than objective. Yet these teachers were evangelical in spirit, and could write books and deliver discourses acceptable to orthodox people, who found in them nutritious food, healthful stimulants, and soothing cordials.

In connexion with this it must not be concealed that there set in a current of another kind. Not the old habit of dwelling upon the *reasonableness* of Christianity till people became weary of it, but a new habit of regarding Christianity principally in relation to science, making it not so much reasonable as scientific. Science came to be enthroned, and to rule everything. Development was pronounced to be universal. It was believed to produce religions, as it produces species. Religions could be accounted for on philosophical principles. Comparative theology was taken up much in the same way as comparative anatomy. The Bible was counted as one book amongst many, —worth reading, but having no special authority, to

which human minds are bound to defer. So in the formation of religious opinion students were at sea, or rather, were hovering over a flood strewn with wrecks. They resembled Noah's dove, when it had flown out of the ark, and could find no rest; or rather, like Noah's raven, which went to and fro till the waters dried up, and then made for itself a nest in what the waters left.

But, thank God! there came a certain *sweet reasonableness*, which taught that faith in God's word should hold the reins and guide the steeds of human thought. It applied itself to the study of revelation as the supreme standard of belief, interpreting its contents after a reasonable manner, comparing Scripture with Scripture, not drawing a scheme of divinity from one class of texts alone. It looked at truth as a many-sided mountain, to be gazed at under different angles of vision, with a firm conviction underlying every view, that phases of impression different from each other are reconcilable. It reverentially acknowledged the existence of mystery round the openings of revelation, and accepted the principle that Christianity, like nature, is a system imperfectly understood. It had, too, a steady preference for the practical over the speculative, in all matters concerning religion. Above all, there came this source of hopefulness,—the careful study of Holy Scripture in the light of improved criticism, carried on widely and zealously, and not without due appreciation on the part of English Christendom in general. There began to be a better understanding than there had been of the true relation of theology to religion. It was

seen that scientific systems of doctrine were to be distinguished *from*, not confounded *with*, personal religion. Many divines came to judge more fairly, more dispassionately, those who differed from them, than was once the case. Further, in connexion with a devout recognition of our Lord's divinity and redemption, His holy and beautiful human life, as pourtrayed in the Gospels, was more prominently exhibited, and the imitation of His example more frequently enforced; not in a hard way, as the pattern merely of a good man, but in a devout manner, recognising God in Christ, and realizing the momentous fact, that through our Lord's perfect humanity we discern His glorious divinity, and so learn to be imitators of God as dear children.

But there were losses as well as gains. Vital truths were denied by some, and doubted by others, and thrown into the background by many more. A diminished sense of sin, a fainter conviction as to the need of an atonement, a hazy presentation of the Spirit's work, a forgetfulness of the present mediation of Christ as High Priest and Intercessor, and a neglect of the enforcement of spiritual conversion,—these were symptoms of an unhealthy and feeble theology, in some quarters.

This superficial review will apply, not only to the Church of England, but to other denominations, because old literary barriers between them were falling down, and men of different opinions began to read one another's books, as they had never done before. Where sharply defined theological views on two sides of debated questions are strongly held,—without

any breadth of religious sympathy, any desire to live with other Christians in harmonious fellowship, as servants in common under one Divine Lord,—the course of action is plain enough. Christendom then gets divided into hostile camps, and the warfare is very melancholy, very disgraceful. But in all instances, where clearly formed and distinctly pronounced opinions exist,—and by the side of these opinions there coexists what may be called a catholic desire for love and union, and, as far as possible, co-operation,—it is a difficult matter to decide how these distinct tendencies are to be correlated, how they are to be harmoniously combined in action, how the person who feels it a duty to contend earnestly for the faith “once delivered to the saints” is to cultivate intelligently, and to express sincerely, as much charity and sympathy as can be towards those differing from him in some important points of theological doctrine. It will be a blessed day for our English Christendom when Christians shall feel it one of their first duties to study and solve that important problem.

INDEX.

Alexander, John, i., 242.
Alexander, Dr., of Edinburgh, ii., 282.
Alford, Dean, i., 178 ; ii., 225, 429.
Allen, William, i., 366.
American Revivals, ii., 83.
Anti-State Church Association, ii., 409.
Archer, Dr., ii., 307.
Arianism, i., 205.
Arnold, Dr., i., 84, 88 ; ii., 164.
Aspland, Robert, i., 53, 57, 223.

Baillie, Joanna, i., 228.
Baptists, i., 260-291 ; ii., 145-152.
Baptist Colleges, i., 279 ; ii., 418.
Baptist Missionary Societies, i., 280 ; ii. 357, 418.
Barbauld, Mrs., i., 227.
Barrington, Bishop, i., 35.
Bathurst, Bishop, i., 37.
Bell, Andrew, i., 111, 364.
Belsham, Thomas, i., 213, 216.
Bennett, Dr. James, i., 203 ; ii., 282.
Benson, Joseph, i., 322.
Bicentenary Celebration, ii., 414.

Bickersteth, i., 35, 126 ; ii., 208.
Binney, Thomas, ii., 136.
Birrell, ii., 300.
Black, i., 291.
Blackburn, John, ii., 84, 103.
Blomfield, Bishop, i., 50.
Bloomfield, Vicar of Bisbrook, i., 96.
Bourne, Hugh, i., 341.
Bradley, Charles, ii., 73.
Brandram, Andrew, ii., 377.
British Anti-State Church Association, ii., 272.
British Banner, ii., 28.
British and Foreign Bible Society, i., 47 ; ii., 88.
Brock, Dr., ii., 297.
Brougham, Lord, i., 45.
Bryan, Mr., i., 340.
Buchanan, Claudio, i., 138.
Bull, William, i., 233.
Bunting, Dr. Jabez, i., 316.
Bunting, William, ii., 318.
Burder, George, i., 181.
Burder, Dr. H. F., i. 241.
Burgess, Dr., i., 36.
Burial in Churchyards, ii., 408.

Burnet, John, ii., 277.
Burton, Dr. E., i., 95.
Butler, Alban, i., 62.

Calcutta, Bishopric, i., 109.
Calvinistic Methodists, i., 293; ii., 323.
Campbell, Dr. John, ii., 280.
Carey, Dr. William, i., 270.
Carey, Bishop, ii., 49.
Carr, Bishop, ii., 50.
Catholic Apostolic Church, i., 374, 385.
Cecil, i., 116.
Chalmers, Dr., ii., 260, 332.
Chaplin, William, ii., 106.
Chase, Samuel, i., 124.
Chichester, Lord, ii., 365.
Christian Knowledge Society, i., 141.; ii., 55.
Christian Witness, ii., 280.
Church Building, i., 14.
Church Missionary Society, i., 140; ii., 57.
Church Rates Abolition, ii., 116, 404.
Church Reform, ii., 15.
Church and State controversy, ii., 266.
Clarke, Dr. Adam, i., 324; ii., 153.
Clapham Sect, i., 131.
Claytons, The, i., 237.
Clergymen in 1830, ii., 8.
Close, Dean, ii., 73.
Clowes, John (Swedenborgian), ii., 384.
Clowes, William, i., 341.
Coke, Dr., i., 312.
Colenso Controversy, ii., 400.

Coleridge, Justice, i., 162.
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, ii., 26, 268.
Collyer, Dr., i., 239.
Colonial Missionary Society, ii., 279.
Conder, Josiah, ii., 269.
Congregational Chapel Building, ii., 288.
Congregational Colleges, i., 241; ii., 286, 417.
Congregational Lecture, ii., 130, 282.
Congregational Library, i., 102.
Congregational Union, ii., 104, 415, 417.
Convocation, ii., 394.
Cook, John, i., 247.
Coplestone, Bishop, i., 49.
Corn Laws, Repeal of, ii., 172.
Corporation and Test Acts repealed, i., 51.
Cox, Dr. F. A., i., 281; ii., 146.
Crabbe, George, i., 98.

Dalton, John, i., 365.
Darby, Mr., ii., 337.
Davidson, Dr., ii., 285.
Dealtry, Dr., i., 133.
Declaration of Faith and Order, (Congregational), ii., 106.
Discipline Act, ii., 393.
Disestablishment of the Church, ii., 410.
Dissenters' Controversy with the Established Church, ii., 10, 266, 272, 410.
Douglas, Archibald, ii., 104.
Douglas, Bishop, i., 33.
Drummond, Henry, i., 130, 389.

Eardley, Sir Culling (Smith), ii., 351.
Ecclesiastical Commission, ii., 19, 387.
Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, ii., 114, 269.
Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, ii., 263.
Eckett, Robert, ii., 161.
Edgeworth, Frank, i., 168.
Elementary Education, ii., 404.
Elliott, Richard, ii., 276.
Episcopal Revenues, ii., 19, 51.
Erskine, Thomas, ii., 28.
Essays and Reviews, ii., 396.
Evangelical Alliance, ii., 343.
Exeter Hall, ii., 87 ; preaching services, ii., 425.
Eyre, of Homerton, i., 182, 298.

Faber, F. W., ii., 192.
Faber, Geo. Stanley, i., 88.
Faraday, Michael, i., 289.
Fletcher, Dr. Joseph, ii., 105.
Forster, William, i., 359 ; ii., 330.
Fosbrooke, T. D., i., 96.
Foster, John (essayist), i., 278.
Fox, Caroline, ii., 334.
Friends, Society of, i., 352 ; ii., 326.
Froude, R. H., i., 171 ; ii., 36.
Fry, Elizabeth, i., 362 ; ii., 333.
Fuller, Andrew, i., 262-277.

George III, i., 41.
George IV, i., 44.
Gerické (missionary), i., 107.
German Theology, ii., 24.
Gilbert, of Nottingham, i., 259.
Gill, Dr., i., 282.
Gisborne, Thomas, i., 119.

Godwin, W., i., 169.
Goode, W., ii., 208.
Gorham Controversy, ii., 176.
Goult, J. N., i., 248.
Graham, James, i., 99.
Grant, Dr. (Roman Catholic), ii., 258.
Grellet, Stephen, i., 358.
Groves, Mr., ii., 336.
Gurney, J. J., i. 38 ; ii., 331.
Gurney, Samuel, ii., 332.

Haldane, James, i., 298.
Hale, Archdeacon, ii., 238.
Halley, Dr. R., i., 241 ; ii., 283.
Hall, Robert, i., 11, 42, 193 ; ii., 145.
Hamilton, Dr. Winter, i., 243 ; ii., 284.
Hampden, Bishop, ii., 80.
Harcourt, Bishop, i., 35.
Hare, Charles Julius, ii., 217.
Hare, William Augustus, i., 76.
Harris, Dr. W., i., 241.
Harrison, Joshua, i., 247.
Harrowby, Lord, i., 16.
Hartley (Swedenborgian), ii., 383.
Hastings, Warren, i., 26.
Heber, Reginald, i., 71-90.
Henderson, Dr., i., 186 ; ii., 132.
Henley, Lord, Scheme of Church Reform, ii., 16.
Hicksite Heresy, i., 356.
Hill, Rowland, i., 294.
Holland, Lord, i., 18, 20, 27.
Home Missionary Society, i., 253.
Hook, Dean, i., 79 ; ii., 66.
Horne, Thomas H., i., 96.
Horsley, Bishop, i., 33.
Hughes, Joseph, i., 187.

Hunter, Dr., i., 230.
Huntington, William, 300.
Hurd, Bishop, 33.

Independents or Congregationalists, i., 234-249; ii., 102-144, 276-296.

Inglis, Sir Robert, i., 66.

Irish Church, i., 2; ii., 17.

Irish Evangelical Society, i., 253.

Irish Union, i., 1.

Irving, Edward, i., 130, 374, 382-5.

Ivimey, Joseph, i., 65; ii., 145.

James, J. A., i., 245; ii., 106, 144, 343.

Jay, William, i., 246.

Jones, William, i., 184.

Jubilee, Baptist Mission, ii., 357; London Missionary Society, ii., 360; Church Missionary Society, ii., 363; Tract Society, ii., 369; Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, ii., 370; Sunday-school Union, ii., 375; Bible Society, ii., 376.

Kaye, Bishop, i., 49.

Keble, John, i., 170; ii., 38, 62.

Kilham, Alexander, i., 333.

Kinghorn, Joseph, i., 265.

Kingsley, Charles, ii., 224.

Knibb, William, ii., 149.

Laurence, Archbishop, i., 89.

Lancaster, Joseph, i., 363.

Leifchild, Dr., i., 247; ii., 134.

Lewis, Thomas, i., 297.

Liberation Society, ii., 409.

Lloyd, Bishop, i., 164; ii., 34.

London City Mission, ii., 93.

London Missionary Society, i., 253; ii., 139, 360.

Lindsay, Dr. James, i., 209.

Lindsey, Theophilus, i., 213.

Lingard, Dr., ii., 264.

Livingstone, Dr., ii., 289.

McAll, Dr., ii., 141.

Macaulay, Zachary, i., 185.

McNeile, Dr., ii., 73.

Madras, Bishopric of, ii., 57.

Maitland, Dr., ii., 212.

Maltby, Bishop, i., 194.

Manifestations in Scotland and in Scotch Church, Regent's Square, i., 380.

Manning, Dr., ii., 192.

Mansel, Dean, ii., 222.

Mant, Bishop, i., 89.

Marsden, Samuel, ii., 58.

Marsh, Bishop, i., 47, 193.

Marshman, Dr., i., 273.

Martin, John, i., 264.

Martyn, Henry, Death of, i., 27.

Maurice, F. D., ii., 219.

Maynooth College, i., 4; ii., 252.

Melville, Henry, ii., 76.

Methodist Association of Free Churches, ii., 317.

Methodist Centenary, ii., 310.

Methodist Controversies, i., 321; ii., 155, 315.

Methodist Deed of Declaration, i., 305.

Methodist Foreign Missions, i., 311, 317; ii., 341, 421.

Methodist Literature, i., 322.

Methodist Mixed Conference, ii., 422.

Methodist New Connexion, i., 333 ; ii., 320.
Methodist Revivals, i., 307.
Methodists, Bible Christian, i., 340.
Methodists, Primitive, i., 300 ; ii., 320.
Middleton, T. F., Bishop, i., 71.
Mildred, Van, Bishop, i., 90.
Milman, Dean, i., 94.
Milner, Dr., i., 63.
Moffat, Dr., ii., 291.
Moore, Archbishop, i., 36.
Moravians, i., 369 ; ii., 335.
More, Hannah, i., 147.
Moody and *Sankey*, ii., 426.
Morison, Dr. John, ii., 278, 374.
Morrison, Dr. Robert, i., 254.

Napoleon Buonaparte, i., 8.
Nares, Edward, i., 89.
New Jerusalem Church, ii., 379.
Newman, J. H., i., 172 ; ii., 38, 182.
Newton, John, i., 114.
Newton, Dr. Robert, i., 329.
Newton, Mr. (Plymouth brother), ii., 341.
Noel, Hon. Baptist, ii., 73.
"Nonconformist" Newspaper, ii., 272.
Norris, i., 100.
North, Brownlow, Bishop, i., 34.
Norwich (Parish Churches), i., 155.

Oaths required by Toleration Act, i., 23.
Opie, Mrs., i., 229 ; ii., 332.
Owen, John, i., 187.
Oxford University, i., 161.

Palmer, William, ii., 37.
Parr, Dr., i., 10, 82.
Parsons, James, i., 243.
Paul's (St.) Cathedral, i., 153 ; ii., 427.
Payne, Dr., ii., 283.
Pearson, Canon, ii., 230.
Peel, Sir Robert, i., 53, 64 ; ii., 253.
Phillips, E. T. M., ii., 74.
Philpotts, Bishop, ii., 49, 206.
Pike, J. G., i., 287.
Pitt, William, i., 8, 11.
Plymouth Brethren, ii., 336.
Porteus, Bishop, i., 34, 109.
Price, Dr. R., i., 207.
Price, Dr. Thomas, ii., 147.
Priestley, Dr., i., 211.
Prince Consort, ii., 261, 371.
Propagation of the Gospel Society, i., 110 ; ii., 57, 246, 370.
Public Worship Regulation Act, ii., 393.
Pusey, Dr., i., 177 ; ii., 40, 65.
Pye-Smith, Dr., i., 239.

Quaker Doctrines, i., 357.
Quaker Home life, i., 367.
Quakerism on the decline, i., 355.
Quakers Meeting, i., 353.
Queen Anne's Bounty, i., 13 ; ii., 387.

Raffles, Dr., i., 245.
Ray, John Mead, i., 247.
Redford, Alexander, i., 247.
Redford, Dr., ii., 107.
Rees, Dr. Abraham, i., 53, 208.
Reform Bill, ii., 2.
Regium Donum, ii., 124.

Religious Freedom Society, ii., 269.
Revision of Authorized Version, ii., 394.
Revivals, English, ii., 83.
Reynolds, John, ii., 277.
Richmond, Legh, i., 121, 183, 201,
Rippon, Dr., i., 12, 282.
Ritual Commission, ii., 390.
Ritualism, ii., 201, 389.
Robinson, Thomas, i., 118.
Rogers, Henry, ii., 293.
Roman Catholic Aggression, ii., 256.
Roman Catholic Emancipation, i., 61.
Romilly, Sir Samuel, i., 40.
Routh, Dr., i., 165.
Rowland, David, ii., 161.
Rutt, J. Fowell, i., 228.
Ryder, Bishop, i., 47.

Sale of Church livings, 401.
Salvation Army, ii., 426.
Scott, Thomas, i., 117.
Scott, Walter, ii., 283.
Sedgwick, Professor, i., 179.
Selwyn, Bishop, ii., 70, 246.
Serampore Mission, i., 269.
Sheppard, John, i., 278.
Shuttleworth, Bishop, ii., 81.
Sidmouth, Lord, i., 22.
Simeon, Charles, i., 121.
Sinclair, Archdeacon, ii., 237.
Slavery, Abolition of, ii., 5.
Smith, William, i., 31, 53.
Smith, Sydney, i., 98; ii., 165.
Soames, Henry, i., 95.
Stanley, Bishop, i., 73; ii., 51.
Stanley, Dean, ii., 227, 431.
Steane, Dr., ii., 147.

Stowell, Canon, ii., 73.
Stowell, Dr., ii., 286.
Stephens, J. R., ii., 155.
Sterling, John, i., 170.
Stokes, John, i., 183.
Stratten, James, ii., 134.
Sumner, Archbishop, i., 50; ii., 181, 352.
Sumner, Bishop, i., 50.
Sutton, Archbishop, i., 20, 36.
Spa Fields Chapel, i., 293.
Swedenborgianism, ii., 379.

Tait, Archbishop, ii., 186, 433.
Taylor, Isaac, ii., 209.
Taylor of Carter Lane, i., 209.
Taylor of Ongar, i., 259.
Taylor, Daniel, i., 285.
Taylor, Adam, i., 287.
Thirlwall, Bishop, ii., 25, 204.
Thornton, H., i., 30, 131.
Thorpe, William, i., 60, 246.
Toleration Act, i., 23, 37.
Toller, Thomas, of Kettering, i., 262.
Tomlin, Bishop, i., 34, 59.
Toulmin, Dr., i., 215.
"Tracts for the Times," ii., 41.
Tractarianism, ii., 182-187.

Unitarian Academy, i., 220.
Unitarian Fund, i., 218.
Unitarian Societies, i., 217.
Universities, Opening of, ii., 171.

Vaughan, Dr. Robert, ii., 131, 278.
Venn, John, i., 133.
"Voluntary Church Magazine," ii., 115.

Walford, W., i., 240.

Ward, William, i., 273.
Ward, W. G., ii., 192.
Wardlaw, Dr., ii., 131, 267.
Warren, Dr., ii., 157.
Watson, Bishop, i., 34.
Watson, Richard (Wesleyan), i., 314, 326; ii., 153.
Waugh, Dr. Alexander, i., 230.
Wells, Algernon, ii., 113.
Wesleyan Methodist Association, ii., 161.
Wesley, John, i., 305.
Westminster Abbey, i., 150.
Whateley, Archbishop, i., 90, 165; ii., 77, 217.
Whewell, Dr., i., 179.
Whitaker, T. D., i., 97.
White, Henry Kirke, i., 122.
White, Blanco, i., 169.
Wilberforce, W., i., 29, 132, 141; ii., 6, 92.
Wilberforce, Bishop, ii., 204, 373.
Wildbore, Mr., i., 248.
Wilkes, Matthew, i., 20, 294.
Williams', Dr., Library, i., 65.
Williams, John, i., 255.
William IV., Coronation, ii., 1.
Wilson, Daniel, i., 125.
Windsor, St. George's Chapel, i., 154.
Winterbottom, Mr., i., 284.
Wiseman, Cardinal, ii. 256.
Yarmouth Episcopal Churches, i., 158.
Young, Dr. John, ii., 307.
Young Men's Christian Association, ii., 354.

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